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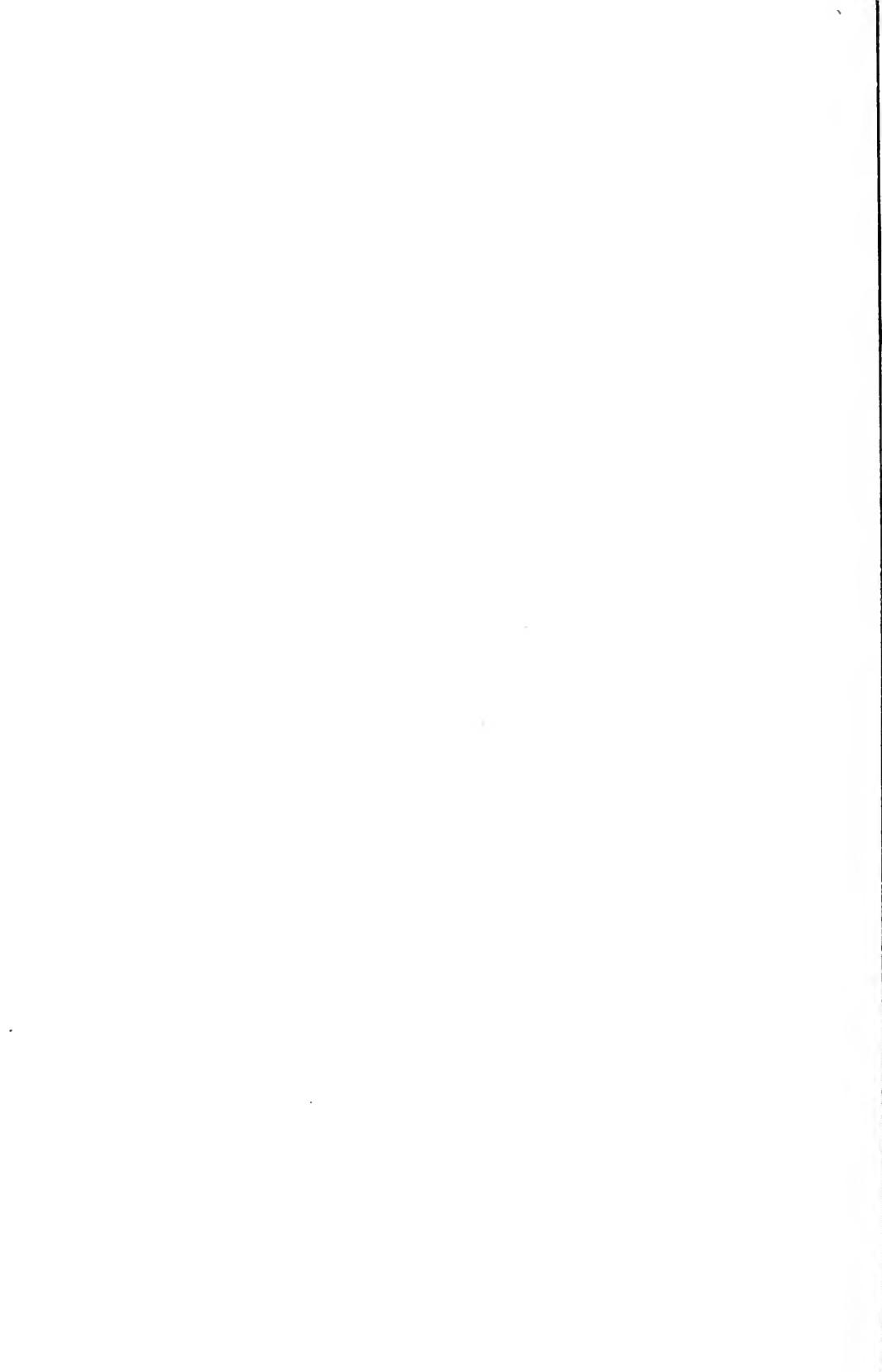
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Mrs. Jane Foster Wheeler.

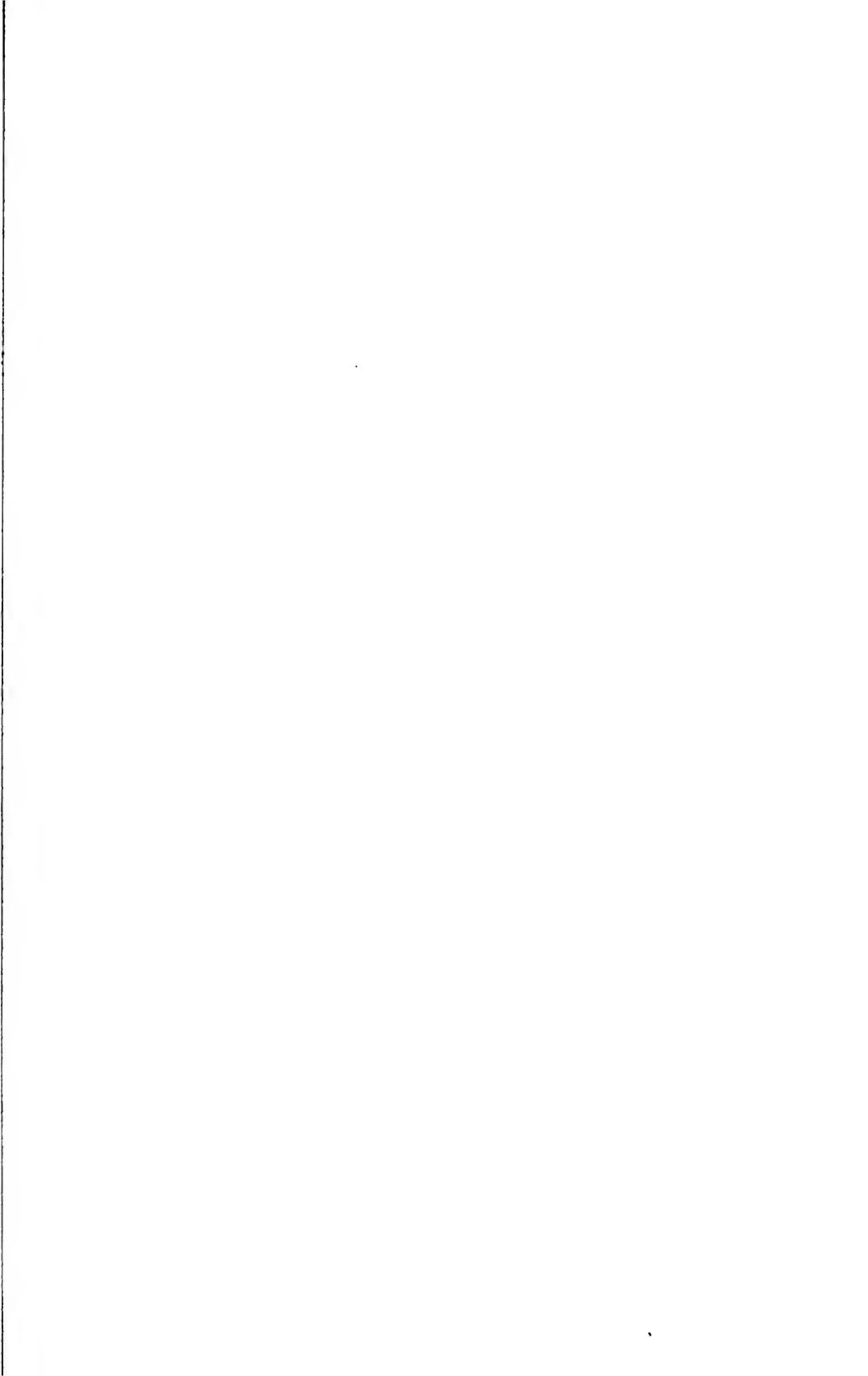


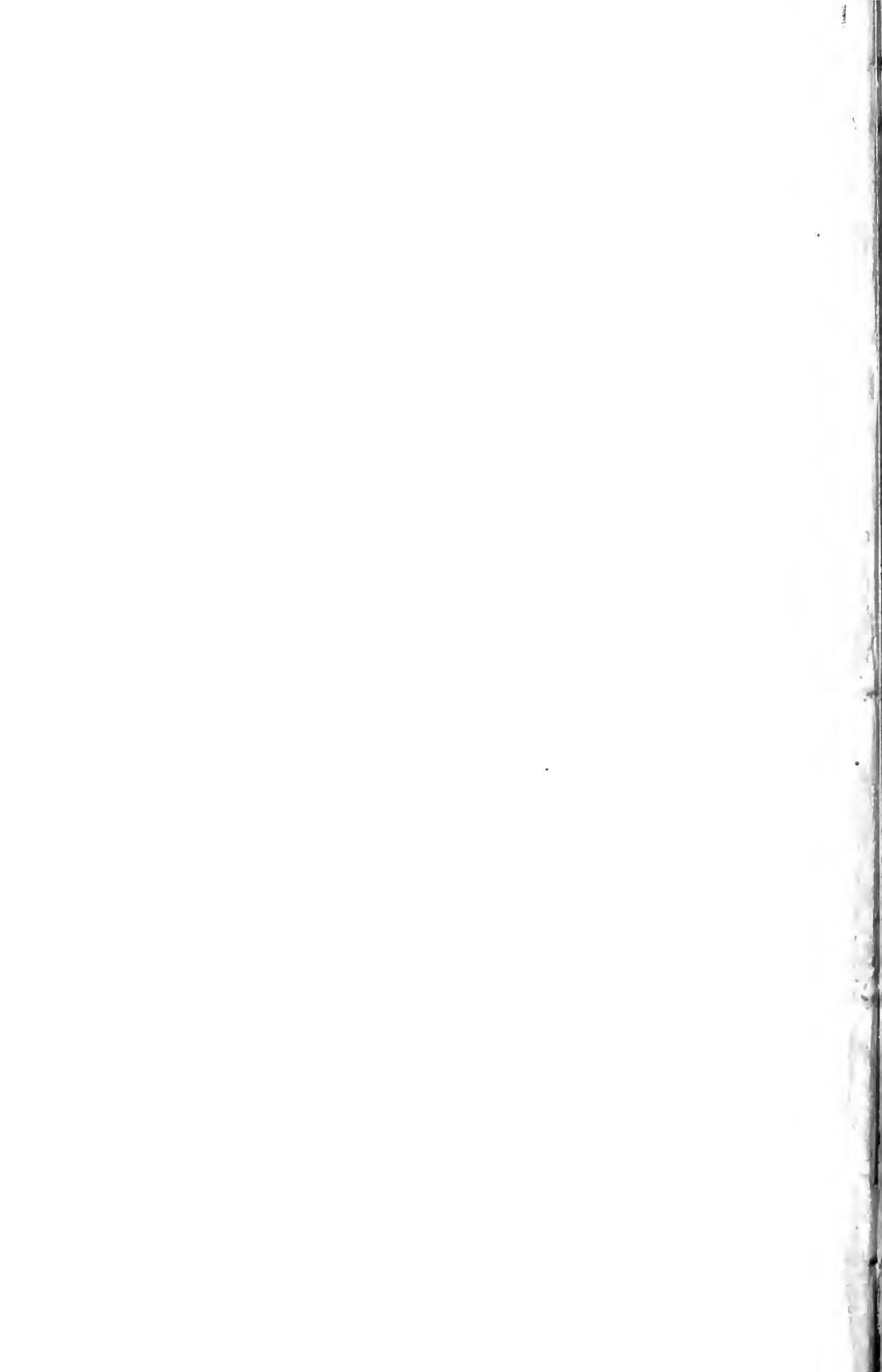
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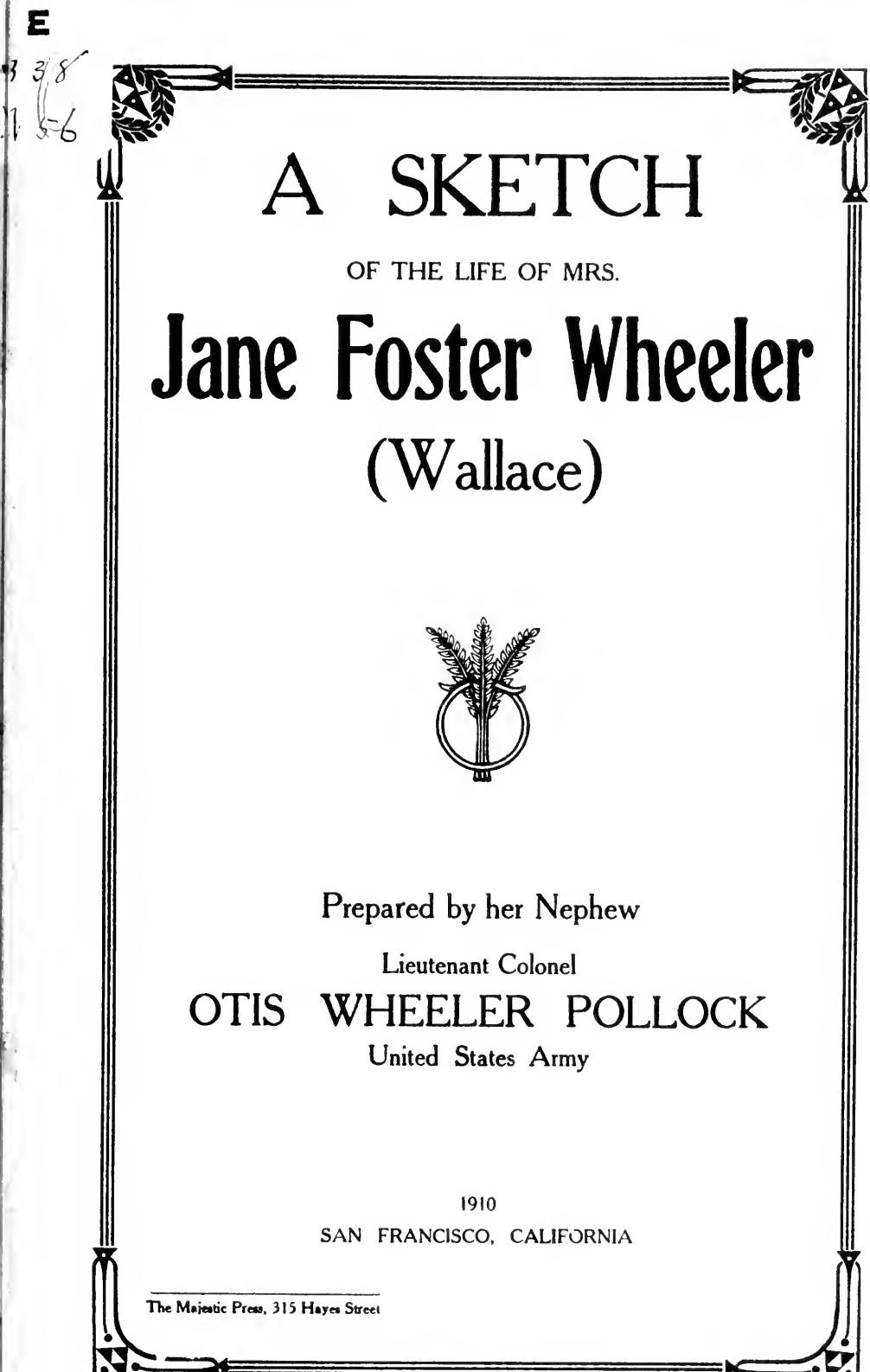
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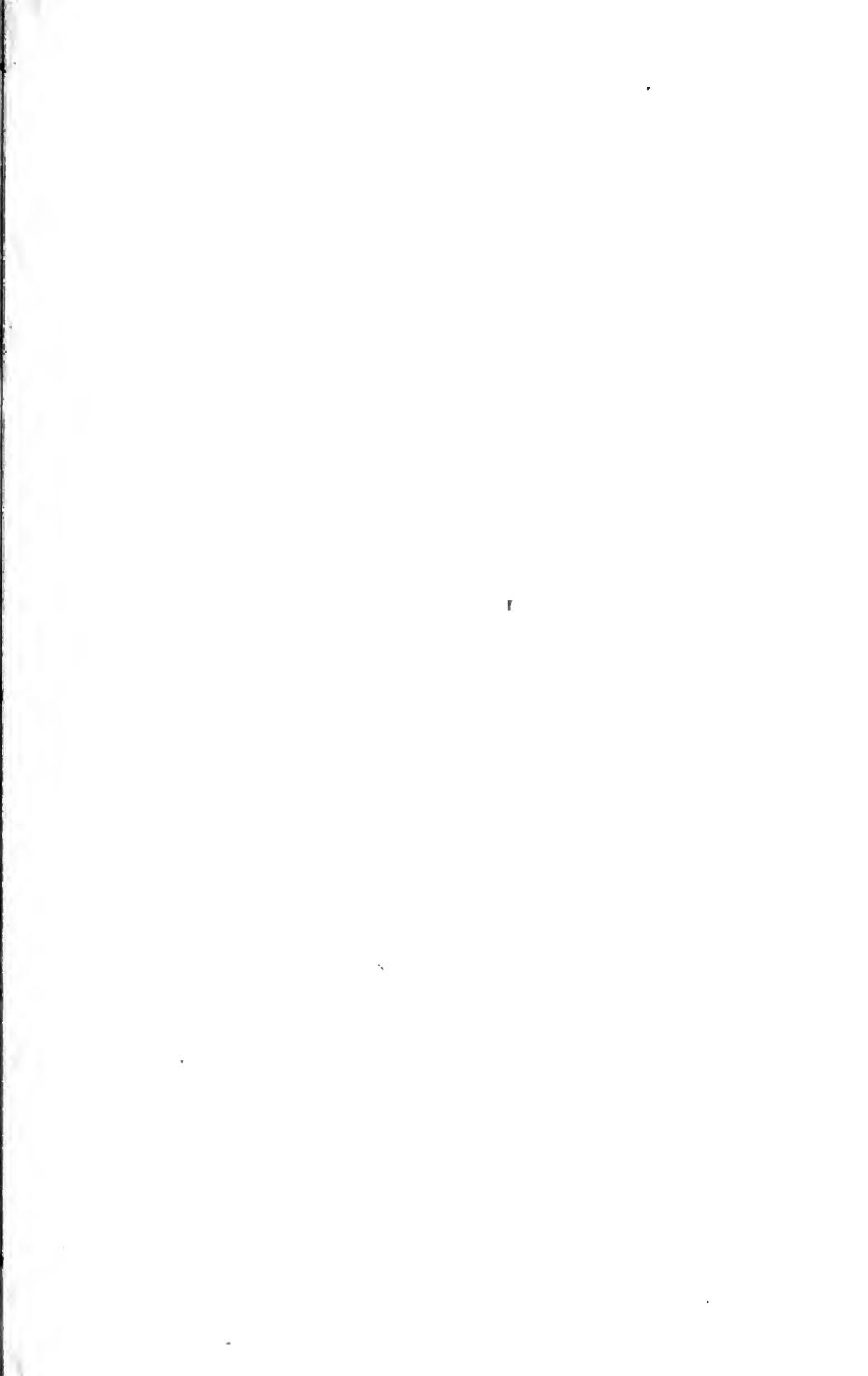














Mrs. Jane Foster (Wallace) Wheeler

*Born, April 7th, 1810
Died, February 19th, 1908*

A SKETCH

OF THE LIFE OF

Mrs. Jane Foster Wheeler

(Wallace)

Prepared by her Nephew

Lieutenant Colonel
OTIS WHEELER POLLOCK
United States Army

1910
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

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SKETCH
Of the Life of Mrs. Jane Wheeler



HE Wallaces, the Herons, the Culbertsons, the Evens family and the Gordons, were all people of education, refinement and position, and of a high order intellectually. These were the ancestors and blood relations of Mrs. Wheeler. The inheritance by her of the superior qualities of her ancestors together with her own natural faculties, rendered her a very superior woman. Her connections by marriage, through the different consanguineous members of her family were equally fortunate; among whom were the Murrays, the Fosters, the Forsters, the Irvines, the Cutts family, (who were related to President Madison), the Crosmans, Commodore Dexter, Major Nelson, and others.

Mrs. Wheeler was born in Erie, Pennsylvania on the seventh day of April, 1810. She was the daughter of Dr. John Culbertson Wallace and Margaret Heron, his wife. Her grandfather, Benjamin ~~Waller~~ of Hanover, Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, was married three times, first to Lettice Ralston, by whom there was one child, Mary, who married James B. Wilson; Secondly to Elizabeth Culbertson, who became the mother of seven children, among them Mrs. Wheeler's father, Dr. John C. Wallace; Thirdly, to Rebecca Stamper, a widow, and Sister of Dr. Benjamin Rush, a celebrated physician of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and a signer of the Declaration of Independence.

By this third marriage there was no issue. The father of Benjamin Wallace, Mrs. Wheeler's great-grandfather, was William, born in County Antrim, in the North of Ireland in 1704. His wife's name was Mary. The father of William, Mrs. Wheeler's great-great-grandfather, was Thomas Wallace, of Ayrshire, Scotland, descended from the Wallaces of Ellerslie, to which family Sir William Wallace, the great Scottish patriot belonged.

A Mr. Culbertson, whose Christian name has not been preserved, of the County Derry in the North of Ireland, emigrated from Scotland. His eldest son, John, emigrated to America in 1712, and settled in London Grove, in London Grove Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania. His brother, Robert, came at the same time. This John died before 1726. His eldest son, John, was born in Ireland in 1710. He was a prominent man in Chester County. He was appointed a lieutenant in Colonel Moore's battalion of the Provincial militia from Chester County in the year 1748. It is presumed that he served in the French and Indian wars. He was buried at Brandywine Manor. A deed dated October 1770, shows that his son Benjamin, and his son-in-law, Benjamin Wallace, were living in Chester County, Pennsylvania. This John Culbertson was twice married, first to Eliza Rogers, in 1731, at the first presbyterian church of Philadelphia. Some of his children were by this wife. She died about 1737 or 1738. He married secondly Mrs. Abigail Whitehill, who had three children when he married her. Elizabeth Culbertson, wife of Benjamin Wallace, was probably the daughter of Mrs. Whitehill, the second wife. From the foregoing it would appear that Mrs. Wheeler's grandmother, Elizabeth Culbertson, was the great-granddaughter of the Mr. Culbertson who emigrated from Scotland to the North of Ireland.

James Gordon Heron, Mrs. Wheeler's maternal grandfather, was the son of James Heron who lived in Dumfries, Scotland. In a letter which he wrote to his son, James Gordon Heron, dated at Dumfries, February 2nd, 1786, he speaks of being in good health and strength, and in his eighty-second year. His wife was Margaret Gordon, a young woman of fine attainments and of a noble line of ancestry, no doubt related to the Marquis of Huntly.

James Gordon Heron, as a young man, was a civil engineer and came to America about the year 1769, and settled in New Jersey. He was commissioned a lieutenant and later promoted to a captaincy in Colonel Hazen's of "Congress own" Continental Line, April 8th, 1777. Was captured at Staten Island, New York, during an attack on the British, August 23rd, 1777. Was exchanged and served with his regiment until 1780, when he resigned on account of the wounds he had received. Among the battles in which he was engaged, were Brandywine and Germantown. He was a member of the Maryland Society of the Cincinnati, a delegate from Cecil County, Maryland to the convention which met at Annapolis in April, 1788, to ratify the constitution of the United States.

Captain Heron married Eleanor Evans of Cecil County, Maryland and resided in Pittsburg prior to 1794. He was a member of the Pennsylvania legislature from Pittsburg. In 1800, he moved to Fort Franklin, which became the town of Franklin, in Venango County, Pennsylvania. He was county commissioner, and also Associate Judge. At one time during the War he served on General Washington's staff. He died December 30th, 1809.

Eleanor Evans, the wife of James Gordon Heron and maternal grandmother of Mrs. Wheeler, was the daughter of James Evans and his wife, Eleanor Kilpatrick.

James Evans, the father of Eleanor, was the son of James Evans, a resident of England, who, with his wife and children, immigrated to America in 1715, and took up land in Chester County, Pennsylvania, not far from the town of Oxford. He was born in England in 1711, and died in 1783, near Port Deposit, Maryland. In 1739 he purchased a four hundred acre tract of land of John and Richard Penn, and in 1752 sold it to his brother John and purchased four hundred acres near Port Deposit on the Susquehanna River in Cecil County.

Mrs. Wheeler remained in Erie, where she was born until after the death of her parents. Her mother having died on the 24th of December, 1823, and her father on December 8th, 1827. During her residence in Erie, she was associated with the families of Reed, Reid, Sill, Forster, Colt, Wilkins, Russell,

Evans, Culbertson, Hamet and others, who were contemporary with her parents. There was possibly a closer intimacy with the Wilkins family than with any of the others. There was a Mrs. Wallace, a widow, who came to Erie; at what time and under what circumstances it can not now be stated and was an inmate of the family of Dr. ~~which is her husband's~~ Wallace for many years. While she was, of course, a blood relation, and from the North of Ireland, the kinship was so far removed that it was not possible to trace the connection. Her maiden name was Mary Montgomery. Her brother, Robert Montgomery, lived in Philadelphia and was United States Consul at Madrid, Spain in 1780. Her brother James Montgomery, was an officer in the Royal Navy. Her sister, Elizabeth, was married and lived in Philadelphia. Her daughter, Mary Wallace married Thomas Wilkins. Their children were Charles, Thomas, James, Joseph, Mary, Jane, John and William.

After the death of Mrs. Wheeler's parents and the dispersal of the family, the incidents of her life will be more interestingly told in her own words. At the request of her children and grandchildren, she, from time to time jotted down recollections of her past life, as follows:

"I was born in Erie in 1810. My father was a doctor; he married Margaret Heron in Maryland and moved to Erie in 1800. They had seven children. I was the fifth; when my eldest sister was about eighteen, she died very suddenly with apoplexy. The shock was so great that neither of our parents ever recovered from it. Mother lived two years in miserable health, and died with a nervous fever. Pa lived two years after her: I was just seventeen at his death. An aunt from Franklin, Pennsylvania, (Mrs. Irvine) came up at his death and took me home with her. I spent the winter there and returned to Erie in the spring. We then broke up house-keeping: my sister, youngest brother and myself, went to Mr. Wilkins' to board. An uncle of ours from Greensburg, Pennsylvania, (Alexander Foster) came to visit us and I went home with him and spent the summer. In the fall I returned again to Erie; and that fall, my eldest brother who had been at Green Bay clerking in his uncle Heron's sutler store for two or three years, was appointed sutler in the third regiment

that was stationed at Jefferson Barracks; he came home to see us and wanted Betsy, Perry and myself to go to the Barracks and keep house; but Betsy was teaching and did not want to go, but agreed to my going if he would promise to bring me back the next spring, which of course he did. Perry and myself went with him; he put Perry in school in St. Louis, and I visited my relatives, as I had some in both regiments, the third and sixth, which were stationed there at the time. Uncle and aunt Heron, Major and Mrs. Nelson and aunt Irvine in the third, and the Colonel and Mrs. Crosman in the sixth. Besides I had a very dear friend, Mrs. Wright, with whom I spent most of my time. Her husband was an officer of the sixth.

"When the time came for me to go home in the spring, Benjamin was in Washington on business, and was absent several months; so I did not go home. I was married that fall to Lieutenant Wheeler of the third regiment of Infantry, at Mr. Wright's house; and a few days after went to housekeeping. Shortly after this, Mr. Wheeler was ordered to Rock Island to the Black Hawk war, and was absent some time. St. Louis at that time was a small place. There were but two or three dry good stores, two boarding houses and one hotel, and it was only for gentlemen. There were no houses above fourth street; it was all woods. Market was the business street. There was a daily mail run between St. Louis and the barracks to accommodate the officers and their families. That was in 1830. That fall the third regiment was ordered to Fort Jessup in Louisiana. We went on steam boats to Natchitoches, and from there in wagons to the fort, which was twenty-five miles from there on the dividing ridge between the Red and Sabina Rivers. We remained there seven years. I had three children born there, Mary, Elizabeth and Wallace. Elizabeth lived to be three years old and died with scarlet fever. When Mary was a year old, I had been from Erie four years. I went back on a visit; Betsy had married a Mr. Pollock and was living in Erie.

"During that summer she and I went into Canada to visit uncle and aunt Murray, who were living on a farm near Toronto. We also visited the Niagara Falls. Late in the fall Mr. Wheeler got a furlough and came to Erie, and in February we went to

New Hampshire to visit his mother and sister. We remained there until the fifteenth of June, and returned to Fort Jessup. Those were the days of slow traveling; we were six weeks going from New Hampshire to Jessup. Mr. Wheeler was promoted to a captaincy and was in command of company 'H'. In the fall of 1838 we were ordered to Fort Smith, Arkansas; when we got to Grand Ecore where we were to take a boat, Mr. Wheeler had two fits of apoplexy, and was not able to go on. The troops went on and when Mr. Wheeler was well enough, we went back to Jessup, where we remained until he was well enough to travel. He went with a soldier who had been left sick in the hospital when the troops left; went through to Fort Smith on horseback. In the fall when the Red River was high enough, for the boats to run, I, with the children and servant followed. The town of Fort Smith was a small place then, only one street just along the River and about a dozen houses. The garrison was a mile back from the River; it was a lovely place. As soon as I got there I wrote to Mary Wilkins and told her I wanted her now to fulfil her promise. When I was a girl, we promised that whichever married first, the other would live with them, and she had never married, but would not come to me, while I had so many relatives about me, saying that I did not need her; but now that I was almost alone, there was but one other lady in the garrison, Mrs. Lieutenant Henry, the mother of General Guy Henry. She (Mary Wilkins) came and was with me until her death, which took place in Troy, some fifteen years ago. She was a great help and comfort to me. Clara Wheeler was born at Fort Smith in 1840. A year and a half after we went to Fort Smith, Mr. Wheeler was ordered to Florida with his command to the Indian War; I remained at Fort Smith with the troops that relieved him. There were several ladies with them. General Taylor had his wife and daughter, Major Leet had his family, and Lieutenant Simmons had a wife.

After we had been at Forth Smith three years, Mr. Wheeler wrote me for Mary and I to take the children and go to Erie, and stay until the war was over, and he would get a furlough and come for us. But about that time Mr. Simmons received orders to go to Florida, and was going to take his family with

him. The Dr. advised me to go with them, as my health was poor and he thought the climate would be better for me than a northern one, and he thought I would not be so uneasy about Mr. Wheeler if I was near him, and Mr. Simmons offered to take charge of us. When we got to New Orleans, We had to remain a week waiting for a vessel to cross the Gulf, and then had to take a small schooner. We arrived safely at Port Leon, but there Mr. Simmons found orders awaiting him to take the same schooner and go to some other part of Florida, so we were left at the hotel there alone. I did not know what to do; I felt wretched, Mr. Wheeler fifty miles away, and did not know we were coming. How to get to him I did not know. When we went to supper, there was a Dr. of the army I knew at the table. I told him how we were situated and he said he was going up to Fort Stansbury that night and he would tell the commanding officer, and he knew he would send a currier to Captain Wheeler; so I made up my mind that I must stay where I was for a few days, at least; but about ten that night, there came a tap at my door. I called to know who was there. He said a sergeant with a letter from Colonel Vose. I got up and took the letter. He said he had a wagon and an escort to take us to the next post, which was twenty-five miles from Port Leon. Early the next morning we were in the wagon and started. Some time during the day, Mary Wilkins saw some magnolias, the first she had ever seen, and she asked the sergeant to let the men get them for her. I felt alarmed at the men leaving the wagon, as we were in an Indian country, and did not know what minute we might be attacked; but I said nothing and Mary got the flowers. Soon after that the men fired off their carabines at some squirrels. I then became thoroughly alarmed, and told the sergeant if he suffered the men to leave the wagon again, I would report him to Colonel Vose. He said it should not occur again. We arrived safely at the post before dark. I found old friends there; Captain and Mrs. Morris, and spent a pleasant night. The next morning we left with a fresh escort, and three miles from the Fort we met Mr. Weeler coming to meet us. His first greeting was, well Jane how have you been these three days?

"We arrived safely that night at Fort Pleasant, fifty miles

from Port Leon. There we found a comfortable house for a hot climate. The whole command had turned out and built it when they heard we were coming. It was of green pine logs and green clapboards for shingles, with weight poles to keep them down. There were no nails in the house. There were four rooms, two on each side of a wide hall, puncheon floors and a stick chimney, that took fire every few days. They built a stationary table in the dining room, with benches on each side of it. The kitchen was in the yard. I had taken my bedding and carpets, but no furniture. The soldiers made us bedsteads and a couch; they also made me a comfortable chair; Mary had taken her rocker with her. They made a setee for the hall, and we sent to Port Leon for dishes. Mr. Wheeler bought three wooden bottom chairs for which he paid three dollars a piece. I hired an old black woman from a planter; so we were very comfortably fixed. My health was poor and the Dr. advised me to ride on horseback. So one day Mr. Wheeler and I started with an escort of sixteen men. Mr. Wheeler wanted me to go and see where he encamped when he first went into Florida. We got as far as the river, two miles from the Fort, and were about to cross it when we met a man and Mr. Wheeler asked him what was the news; he said the Indians were in his corn-field the night before. I did not wait to hear any more, but turned my horse's head and galloped back to the post as fast as my horse could carry me. I did not wait for the escort or anything else, and it was the last ride I took for my health, and I never did see the encampment. Shortly after that we were invited to spend the day and night with a family that lived eight miles from the Fort. We went, Mary and myself, as usual, in the wagon, and Mr. Wheeler on horseback, with an escort of men. We spent a pleasant day and night, and in the morning when we were ready to start home, the soldiers were all drunk; had gotten whiskey in the night, and as it was not safe to go without a guard, Mr. Wheeler left us and took the men back to camp, and sent Lieutenant Dobbins out with a fresh escort, but it was night when he got there, so we had to stay another night, and in the morning it was the same thing: the men all drunk. So we were left there another day, until Dobbins went back and sent Mr. Wheeler after us. He did not suffer

the men to leave the door until we got into the wagon. We got home safely, and I thought it would be the last time I would leave home during the war.

"Mr. Wheeler was in command of three posts, one five miles from Fort Pleasant, and the others ten. Some weeks after our visit to Mrs. Dr. McGee, we were invited by the Lieutenant commanding the post ten miles off to dine with him. Mr. Wheeler insisted on my going, as he had to go; so Mary, the children and myself went in the wagon, and Mr. Wheeler on horseback, with the usual number of men as a guard. We spent a pleasant day, had a good dinner and when we got into the wagon to go home, Mr. Wheeler stopped to give some orders to the lieutenant and the driver said to me, madam the escort are all drunk, shant I drive fast until we get to the next post? I said yes; he started off at a rapid rate. When Mr. Wheeler looked round and saw how we were going, he knew the driver must be as drunk as the rest. He came after us as fast as he could, but never overtook us until we got to the next post, which was five miles. There we got a sober escort and arrived safely at home; so that ended my visiting while at Pleasant. We had plenty of company, Mr. Wheeler being in command, we entertained all the officers that came on duty and all that passed through to other posts in Florida. Mr. Wheeler was from home a great deal of the time after Indians, tramping through the swamps and sleeping on the ground. At one time he was gone six weeks. When I had been at Fort Pleasant six months, there came an order one morning at guard-mounting, for Mr. Wheeler to break up camp and go to Fort Stansbury, some sixty miles from Pleasant, between Port Leon and Tallahassee. Mr. Wheeler asked if he would send me a couple of men, if I could pack up, as he had all he could do to attend to getting the command ready to march. So at two o'clock that afternoon we were in the wagons on our way. That night we encamped out in a pouring down rain. We did not get wet, but the dampness was not pleasant. The next morning we arrived at Stansbury where we found pleasant quarters. We spent the winter there. While there I visited the Wacula Spring, and went to Tallahassee one Sunday to church. In the spring the war ended.

"While we were at Stansbury, Mr. Wheeler and I took a trip to Cedar Keys and Tampa Bay. The latter is a lovely place. When the war closed, the third regiment was ordered to Jefferson Barracks. Mr. Wheeler brought in the last Indians that were brought in. When we arrived at the Barracks, we sent Mary Wheeler to Erie to attend school. Mr. Wheeler was so crippled with rheumatism he was not able to do duty, so he resigned and we came to Troy, where he had a brother living. We went on a farm a mile from town. I had three children born here, Otis, Benjamin and Norton. Some years after, when Wallace was grown, he and I took a trip East; we first visited Erie; it had been thirty-five years since I had been there before, and of course I found very few outside of my sister's family, that I knew. We went from there to Syracuse, New York, to visit aunts Irvine and Nelson and cousin Hannah Cutts; thence to New Hampshire to visit Mr. Wheeler's relatives, after which we returned home. When we got back, Wallace went to clerk on a boat that ran between St. Louis and New Orleans. When Mary finished her schooling, she came home and in 1848 she died. It was the first year of the Civil War that Wallace and I went East. He afterwards married Mary Montague and farmed in St. Charles County. He died in 1880 with pneumonia. Otis married Cherrie Dyer, and was deputy marshal in St. Louis for several years. He is now a special agent on the Cotton Belt Road and is living in Tyler, Texas. Clara also went to school in Erie and after her return, married lawyer McKee and lived in Troy. A few years after McKee died, she left Troy and makes her home with her daughters, one of which lives in Washington, D. C. and the other in Brownwood, Texas.

"Norton Wheeler died with consumption. Mr. Wheeler died in 1872 with kidney trouble. Ben married soon after his father's death, a Mrs. Adams, a widow, and lived with me between two and three years, when they bought a home and I lived with them for twenty-four years. It is forty-six years since I came to Troy, and I was ninety years old the seventh of last April. My eldest brother, Benjamin, was a major in Fannin's regiment, and was killed with the rest of the prisoners, at Goliad Texas. My second brother, Gordon Wallace, married Margaret

Fulkerson and farmed in St. Charles County, Missouri, and died there. My youngest brother, William Perry Wallace, died at Brownsville, Texas, where he with a partner was keeping a store and at his death, his partner took everything.

"My father, John Culbertson Wallace, in the war of 1812 served in the army as a surgeon, for a while he was stationed at Pittsburgh with General_____

"Although I was only four years old when the war closed I can remember the Navy Officers coming to my father's to bid them good bye; I can only remember the names of two of them; Commodore Perry, who was a warm friend of Pa, and my youngest brother was named for him. The other was Lieutenant Holdup, who afterwards changed his name to Stevens for a fortune.

Another Paper, Evidently Written Later



THE first visit I made East was in 1833. I left home in 1829 and had never been back. It was the first day of May and a very hot day. Mary my oldest child was a year old that day; we went to Nacatosh in a wagon, and had to stay there for a week waiting for a boat to New Orleans. Mr. Wheeler staid with us at the boarding house. Captain Morris and family and Mrs. Captain Harris were also going East. When we arrived at New Orleans we found a boat that was to leave for Wheeling, Virginia, in a day or two, and went from the boat we were on, to it. The next day Captain and Mrs. Morris were going up in town to do some shopping and asked me to go with them; so I left Mary with Mrs. Harris and went. I remember, among other things, I bought a corral necklace; and when we got back to the boat, I found that we have been shopping on Sunday. I had lost the day of the week, and from the stores and business houses all being open, it never struck me as being Sunday. When we got to Louisville, Mrs. Harris left us, and when we got to Wheeling, Captain and Mrs. Morris left and went to Albany, New York, where he was ordered on recruiting service. They put me in the care of the captain of the boat, and when we got to Pittsburgh he went for cousin Alexander Foster, and he came and took me to a hotel in the city where he and uncle Foster, boarded. I had a letter from Dr. Craig of Jessup to his brother in Pittsburgh.

I gave the letter to Alec to deliver and went to my rooms and laid down. In a short time Mr. Craig came and insisted on my going to his house, where I spent two or three days very pleasantly. I then found company going to Erie, where I spent the summer with my sister, Mrs. Pollock, and in the fall Mr. Wheeler got a furlough and came on to take me to New Hampshire, to visit his mother and sisters.

At the time we were to start, I was taken with pneumonia and by the time I was able to travel it was February. We started one day after dinner in the stage coach in a snow storm. We got to North East about nine at night, and from there we had to go in a wagon. The roads were so bad we traveled all that night the next day and night, and got to Buffalo the next morning at seven. Our road lay along the Lake Shore and we went over snow banks as high as a house. The men would have to hold up the wagon as we were passing over them. We staid in Buffalo a day and a night, and left there about nine in the morning in a stage coach with nine inside passengers and three babies. We were as close as sardines in a box. In that way we traveled until ten at night, when we stopped for supper. I felt as if I could not go any farther in that way. Mr. Wheeler found the mail coach just ready to start out with only four passengers, and they were allowed to carry six, so we took the vacant seats in it, and were very comfortable the rest of the night. In the morning we got to Skenectidy, and from there to Albany we went on the railroad. It was the first one built in the United States, and the cars were drawn by horses. At that time we staid in Albany to rest and started at four in the morning in the stage, and at eleven that night we got to a hotel on the top of the Green Mountains where we rested until four, and that night between nine and ten we got to Mr. Fox's in Hancock. They were not looking for us but their son, who was in business in Boston, had just arrived a few minutes before us, and they had a good fire and a hot supper, both of which we enjoyed, for we were both cold and hungry. We remained there and at Mount Vernon visiting Mr. Wheeler's mother and sisters until the fifteenth of June. My visit there was a very pleasant one; all were so kind. We came back as far as Buffalo in the stage. We spent a few

days in Albany on the way, visiting some army friends. At Buffalo we took a boat for Erie; it was the old Superior. It was the first boat, that is steam boat, that had been on the lakes. I remember when it came to Erie the first time; it was a great curiosity; everybody flocked to see it, mother among the rest, and she took me with her. I was quite young then. It was commanded by Captain Ruff, a little Scotchman; he was a great friend of Pa and uncle Murry, and visited us often. I remember at one time the woods all around the town were on fire, and all the men were out fighting the fire to keep it from getting to the magazine which was full of powder, and the little Captain was sitting on uncle Murry's porch dozing. Aunt said to him, Captain if the fire gets to the magazine, will it blow up the town? He said, I, I, Mem it will send us all a skylarking; and dropped off into a doze again.

After spending a week in Erie with my sister, we came by stage to Pittsburgh, and there had to wait a day for a boat, to go down the river. The boat only went to Louisville, where we had to wait over a week for a boat. Davy Crocket was at the hotel with us for a few days. He was just from Washington where he had been in Congress, and was on his way to Texas, where he was killed at the Alamo. He was a venerable looking old man; his hair was long, parted in the middle and combed over his ears. He seemed to be a great curiosity to the people. This was in Jackson's time and they were having trouble with the United States Bank. One evening at the supper table he was asked about the bank and replied that the faro bank was the only one he knew anything about, and he had lost five hundred dollars at that, and he never wanted to know anything about banks since.

One evening Mr. Wheeler and I were sitting on the porch at the hotel when Crockett came out and sat down at the other end of the porch; A drunken man came staggering up the steps and peered up into Crockett's face and said how are you Davy? Mr. Wheeler and I were walking one evening in the City when a gentleman came up to me and said; Miss Wallace; I recognized him as Mr. Boyd of Waterford, Pennsylvania, who had visited at my father's when I was a young girl. I intro-

duced him to Mr. Wheeler and he went with us to the hotel and spent the afternoon with us talking over old times. We got a boat at last to the mouth of the Red River, where we had to wait a week for a boat to go up farther. It was the most terrible place I ever was in; the sick and dying all around, and nothing to eat but corn bread and fat meat, and coffee without sugar or cream. After a week we got a boat to Alexandria.

The river was so low that the boat could go no farther; so there we hired a team and went across the country to Jessup, some sixty miles. The first day we went twenty-five miles and stopped at a farm house; the owner of it had been killed a short time before; he was shot through the window, and they ran out to see who did it; a negro was passing, and they took him and hung him, but afterwards it was found out that it was a white man who shot him. The woman told me so many awful things the negroes had done, that I did not know but I might be murdered before morning. We started early the next morning; we had forty miles to go to another stopping place. About the middle of the day we came to a house in the middle of a prairie. We stopped and got our dinners; it was a white man that owned the house who had a black wife. We got lost in the woods after night and it was ten o'clock before we found our way out and got to a house. The man said his wife was dying and he could not keep us; but Mr. Wheeler said we must stay if we slept on the porch, for it was too dark to go farther; so he gave us a bed in a shed room where you could see out in every direction. In the morning he gave us breakfast. There was an old maid there nursing the dying woman, and she would insist on my going in to see her. She died that day, and in six weeks afterwards he married the old maid. We had only twenty miles farther to go, so got to Uncle Heron's in the garrison for dinner. The next day we went into quarters in the Fort, and both Mary and myself were sick for some time.

Another Paper



HE last year or two I was at Fort Smith. General Taylor was there in command. His wife and his daughter, Bettie, were with him. The town of Fort Smith was very small at that time, and there were but two or three families outside of the garrison that we visited. There was an old farmer by the name of Atmor; he had a wife and two daughters. They called on me when I first went there, and after Mrs. Taylor came, Mrs. Atmor had been in town shopping, and among other things she got a broom and had it strapped onto the side of the mule she rode; so on her way home she called on the General's ladies. When Mrs. Taylor went to return the call, she and Bettie came in their carriage for aunt and myself to go with them. When we got there the old man left his work and came in. He made a great fuss over the General's lady, and scarcely noticed the rest of us; but presently he recognized Betty and begged her to excuse him as he thought she was one of his own daughters sitting there. It amused us greatly for his girls were not very refined. One day the old man called at my house and I asked him to stay to dinner, and he said — well the Major asked me to dine with him, and I believe I will give him the preference. Major Bliss was General Taylor's aid at that time, and soon after we left, he and Bettie were married. I left them at Fort Smith and never saw them afterwards; but after he was President, aunts Nelson and Irvine and cousin Hannah Cutts visited Mrs. Taylor, and spent several weeks with her in the White House. She had her own private apartments and was never seen in public. Mrs. Bliss did the honors at the White House.

When General Lafayette visited this country, he honored Erie with a visit of a few hours. My father was appointed to welcome him to the town. They gave him a banquet in a bower on the bank of the Lake where they had a view of the whole bay. The table was elegantly decorated. He held a reception at the home of Juda Colt; all the ladies in town went; I was considered too young to go, but aunt Wilson, a sister of Pa, and my sister Betsy went. Aunt knew him when he was in the country first time; he had visited her father (Benjamin Wallace). I, with other children, watched him as he passed through the streets in an open carriage.

When I was last in Erie, my sister still had the big iron kettle that General Anthony Wayne was boiled in. He died in the Block House there. He had just concluded a treaty at Detroit with the Indians and was on his way home when he was taken sick on the vessel. They brought him to Erie: There being no doctor there of note, they sent to Pittsburgh for Pa. He was a surgeon in the army with General Arbuckle's command there. When he got as far as Franklin, he met a messenger who told him of the General's death. The General requested them to bury him at the foot of the flag-staff on the bank of the Lake. Some years later his son, Isaac Wayne, came from Philadelphia to Erie in a sulky for his father's bones, and asked Pa to see to his being disinterred and his bones packed in a box. When they opened the grave he was found to be in a good state of preservation, with the exception of one foot. So they cut him up and boiled the flesh off his bones, and packed them in a box which was tied to the back of the sulky. The kettle is a large iron one.



The following is from the "Washington Evening Star"
Tuesday, January 24, 1905.

REMOTE PAST RECALLED

Recollections of Mrs. Otis K. Wheeler, Now Ninety-four Years Old.

Reminiscences of the remote past were recalled by a letter recently received by Mrs. C. P. Grandfield of 949 'S' Street

North-West, from her grandmother, Mrs. Otis K. Wheeler of Troy, Missouri, who is ninety-four years old. The letter is in Mrs. Wheeler's handwriting and is clearly written in the bold chirography of the early days of the republic.

The writer says that some newspaper clippings contained in a letter sent her by Mrs. Grandfield, brought back to her many things she had not thought of for years.

"I was fourteen years old;" she states, "when Lafayette visited this country. I was a school girl, and my father was appointed to receive him and welcome him to the town. They gave him a banquet in a bower on the banks of Lake Erie. In the afternoon he held a reception at Mr. Colt's. My sister Betsy and aunt Wilson went. She (Aunt Wilson) was a sister of my father, and had known Lafayette when he was first in this country. He visited at her father's when she was a young lady.

"I remember seeing him (Lafayette) as he passed down the street in a buggy, bowing right and left to the crowd. He was a fine looking man.

"And I remember the Black Hawk war, for it was just after I was married. We were stationed at Jefferson Barracks (the United States cavalry rendezvous near St. Louis, Mo.), and I was so distressed when your grandfather was sent to the war. When he came back I cried for joy. He laughed and said, if I was sorry he had come back, he would go again.

"Your clippings brought to my memory something that occurred seventy years ago: Your grandfather and myself were returning South after a visit to our relatives in the East. We had to wait a week at Louisville for a boat to go down the river. There was at that time a member of Congress named Davy Crockett. Congress had just adjourned and he was on his way to Texas. He was afterwards killed in the Alamo. He wore his hair long, parted in the middle and it hung down his back. It was at the time there was so much trouble in Congress over the United States Bank, and one of the gentlemen at the supper table asked him what had been done in Congress about it. Davy Crockett replied that he knew nothing about banks. That he had lost, one night in Washington, five hundred dollars on the Faro Bank, and had nothing to do with banks since. There was

a great deal written about him in the papers at that time. He was quite a notable character."



The following is a newspaper clipping written by Katherine J. Laws, dated March 9th, 1908.

GRANDMA WHEELER,

"Rosemary, that's for remembrance".

Many loving hearts will pay tribute to the beautiful character of "Grandma Wheeler," and I send my sprig of rosemary in memory of the years of association with her in Washington.

That which most deeply impressed me in her life was her simple faith in the invisible. She looked not to the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.

As shadows became broader and the "windows were darkened," the lights of the "land beyond the sea" cheered and comforted her on the way home. The Pilot who met her was the friend she had loved for nearly a century. What we call death was the disembarking on the eternal shore.

"Immortal? I feel it and know it." Who doubts it of such as she?

In the service conducted by her pastor, the beloved Mr. Kennedy, the sermon, the hymns, appropriately expressed her faith that "death is swallowed up in victory." She was tired after the long voyage, "and there is rest for the weary" voiced in her knowledge that she has laid her burdens down. "Asleep in Jesus," and "We shall sleep, but not forever," reminded us that her awakening was blessed. How often here she awoke to toil and pain and anguish of spirit. But there "none ever awake to weep."

The other day I saw snowdrops nodding in the March wind. They had come up through the dead earth to reveal their fragile loveliness to every passer-by, telling us of a newer and higher life than that in the bed where they lay all winter.

There are souls that dwell among us that accept the conditions of earth, but who feel the breath of the coming spring and who wear the blossoms of celestial graves. Grandma

was one of these. Though we shall not see her responsive face, unfolding the story of a hundred years, the beauty and fragrance of this life shall abide, lifting our thoughts to eternal things.



SHE WILL SLEEP TO-NIGHT

Sent to Mrs. McKee upon hearing of the death of her mother,
Mrs. Jane Wheeler.



MOOTH the braids of her silken hair,
 On her queenly brow with tender care;
Gather the robe in a final fold
 Around the form that will not grow old;
Lay on her bosom, pure as snow,
 The fairest, sweetest flowers that grow
Kiss her and leave her, your heart's delight,
 In dreamless peace she will sleep to-night.

A shadowy gleam of life-light lies
 Around the lids of her slumbering eyes,
And her lips are closed in fond delay
 Of the loving words she had to say;
But her gentle heart forgot to beat,
 And from dainty hands to dainty feet
She is strangely quiet, cold and white,
 The fever is gone; she will sleep to-night.

Put by her work and her empty chair;
 Fold up the garments she used to wear,
Let down the curtain and close the door,
 She will need the garish light no more.
For the work assigned her under the sun,
 Is finished now and the guerdon won.
Fondly kiss, put out the light,
 And leave her alone—she will sleep to-night

Weep for the days that will come no more,
 For the sunbeam glows from hearth to door,

For a missing step, for a nameless grace,
 Of a tender voice and a loving face;
But not for the soul whose goal is won,
 Whose infinite joy is just begun;
Not for the spirit enrobed in light,
 And crowned where the angels are to-night.

Mrs. Cleveland,

February 22, 1908.

Brownwood, Texas.



Captain Wheeler wrote to Mrs. Mary W. Kittredge, his sister, at Mount Vernon, New Hampshire, dated April 29, 1829, at which time he was stationed at Cantonment Leavenworth. He says:

We have an order to go down to Jefferson Barracks (where we left men: St. Louis) and expect a steam boat up this week to transport us. The 6th regiment is there, and all will make eighteen companies; a lovely number of us, I hope that regiment will go away, as we want their quarters, but would like the society of their ladies. I believe they have about fifteen ladies, real dashers. Some of them I wanted to marry in Kentucky, but I was so chicken hearted I did not dare to ask them. They now have married in the 6th Infantry. When I go down I will abuse them. My room mate has just gotten back from the Pawnee Expedition and I conclude from their report, that we shall not have a fight with them. But most all are anxious to flog them, as there is no doubt but they deserve it, as they have killed many whites and will continue to do so till we kill one half and drive the rest into the Rocky Mountains to starve. They live in villages; houses built with perpendicular posts, ten or fifteen feet high, and others laid on about ten feet high, so that the tops will nearly meet, and leave a hole for the smoke to ascend. Fires are always made in the center of the room. A cannon ball would play ned with them; a forty pound shell would play the devil.

We have a garden to leave; just in front of our quarters, of at least twelve acres, just coming up; have grape vines, four hundred plum trees and everything that is good under way, and

we must leave it all. I do not regret it at all, for I wish to leave this river as soon as possible, on account of health and its rapidity. If I get down safe with my company I shall do great things, as it is ten times as dangerous in descending as ascending. I have had command of our company for more than two years, and it has been the most healthy one. We have about fifty sick in eight companies, but I have only one. I, however, have lost ten or twelve men since I came here by death, but I could not help that. My company is the largest now, notwithstanding. But I cannot say very much in favor of its commanding officer, your worthy brother Otis.



Captain Wheeler to Mrs. Sarah Fox, at Hancock; New Hampshire, dated at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri,
August 14, 1829.

I conclude that you saw in the papers that we expected an Indian war. Governor Miller of this state called on our commanding general for his brigade to go against the Indians near Cantonment Leavenworth. All got ready immediately, and as only one steam boat could take half the 6th, one company of the 3rd started in that, and the rest expected to embark the next day. But to our great disappointment, the governor sent another express, saying the case had been misrepresented, so the General ordered our regiment to be in readiness to move at a moment's notice, and has gone up to Cantonment Leavenworth to ascertain the facts. If wanted, we will be sent for immediately. They burlesque the affair very much. Some of the militia companies had to return the second day for provisions and clothes, which I expect was true. It appears that a small party of Indians called on a small settlement of whites and demanded their land, and they would not give it up; the Indians said a large band would come and take it, and then left. The whites of an equal number (30) followed them and demanded that they lay down their arms, when an Indian aimed his rifle at one, and his son shot the Indian, and a fight ensued. Three of each were killed and some wounded. The whites ingloriously fled. The whites were probably the aggressors. They (the Indians) called themselves the

Ireways, a tribe near Cantonment Leavenworth, but they proved to be Sacks.

It took place about half way to Cantonment Leavenworth. The occupants of the Cantonment were much alarmed, as they had only twenty white men and all sick except six. They had eight or nine ladies and about twenty camp women. All the ladies assembled every night in a large hospital which was surrounded by about sixteen cannon. The officers sent and got forty men from Liberty, who will be ordered home as soon as our troops reach them. All were very anxious to go; all the sick officers and soldiers who were able to go reported for duty. We have sixteen ladies here, and among them are the widows of the officers who have gone up. I conclude they will have two companies of the 6th regiment to garrison Cantonment Leavenworth, and the rest will return in the same boat. I expected to have performed wonders, as I now command the grenadier company and the shortest man is six feet two inches; real Samsons. The company is selected.



Captain Wheeler to Miss Eliza Wheeler, at Hancock, New Hampshire, dated at Fort Jessup, Louisiana

August 22, 1832

He mentions having been on sick report for ten days with remittent fever. "I was ordered over to the Texas country, after deserters (after dark) twenty-five miles, and rode there and back without stopping, and exposed to the night swampy air going and the hot sun returning, without much water, which was the probable cause of the fever. Wife is well and enjoys better health than she ever did before. I believe Miss Mary (referring to their little daughter) has never been sick a day. She is not very cross, but will have proper attention shown her. She is very fat and tall, and does her best to scratch a book to pieces if she can get hold of it. She is a great coward for a soldier. The least noise startles her, which makes it difficult to keep her asleep in the day time. Barking of my puppy, crowing of chickens and even the bass drum in the band awakens her often, as the band room is directly back of my quarters. She sleeps well at

night. She is laid on her back with her arms extended and does not move till morning. I do not know yet what color her hair will be; many think red, but I do not. Her eyes now are hazel.

You must have heard of the revolution in Texas, about the first of this month. All of the upper part of Texas turned out and a great many went from about here. I should like to have been there to have seen the wonderful movements of the militia mob. All the spaniards joined the mob at Nacogdoches. Colonel Piedras who was here on the 22nd of February, was the commanding officer of the regular troops, quartered in the village, in an old church. Sides and ends filled in with clay and loop holes to fire through. He had three hundred troops. The rabble had that number engaged and many more looking on. Colonel Piedras' house is red and the militia colonel gave orders for the troops to fire on the first red house they saw in marching into the town, and soon found one with red ends belonging to a saddler, and he looking out of the window, so they let drive at him and put a dozen balls through his head, and left him kicking on his own floor. Another American came running up to the line; I suppose to show them the way, and they were so full of fight, they knocked him over. They marched on till they came to the street that led to the Fort or Barracks. A company of horse charged upon them, which for the moment, knocked every military idea out of the colonel's head, and he bawled out "retreat, retreat, we will fight them to-morrow." The colonel and all his men ran except about one company. On the second charge they had jumped into a pen which they filled full and stood it very well; killed many men and horses and did not make the third. The command was taken from the colonel. The rabble kept a constant fire at the barracks from two o'clock till sundown. The Spanish troops behaved rascally; almost every gun was fired in the air; they did not take sight. They even took off the cocks of their muskets and threw them down at the Colonel's feet. Colonel Piedras found his men would not fight and many had been killed. He left in the night for another point and the next morning was overtaken by only eighteen horsemen who fired on him. Two of his officers seized him by the collar and took him to the enemy.

He was brought back to Nacogdoches as the rabble was there. Two of our officers were there when he was brought in, and he was delighted to see them. He said if he had only a few men who were true to him he could have whipped the rabble. He told the officers he regretted very much that he had not shot his two officers who gave him up to his enemies. One young man went over to the American side and got wounded, and took Colonel Piedras' carriage to come in, and even passed here with it. Our General found it out, and I am told, sent a sheriff after him and took him for stealing. I wish that Piedras had marched for this post; he would have found our regiment on the bank of the Sabine to protect him. They had no cannon on either side.

Jane has been much alarmed about the cholera in Erie, as she has a brother and sister there, but as yet they have not had it in the village.

This Indian business is a sore one for Illinois. They will kill every one of Black Hawk's men who return. Last year and this they sacrificed their farms on this account. I heard one of the Illinois priests swear he would kill any and every one that came near his house. Last year he was the first one to fight them, and this year they burnt his house. He was in Major Hellman's famous fight. Hellman says the Indians were in a line two miles long, and the whole of the hostile band. This priest writes that there were not more than a hundred Indians. They ran past him and returned past him; his horse would not keep up. He says Hellman's men fired and ran; took out their ramrods for whips, and dropped their rifles. He went into camp and told the regular officers (he was well acquainted with them) the story, and the militia swore they would kill the parson.

I have just had a letter from Charles; he is well but not married yet. When at Jefferson barracks he gave me a hint that he would get married if he could find as good a wife as I had. Aunt Irvine sends love. I have just applied to the General to order Lieutenant Cutts to join 'B' company. He has been at Towson acting adjutant there since he was promoted to my company. He is an old beau of Miss Irvine.

Captain Wheeler to his sister, Mrs. Mary Wheeler Kittredge, at Mount Vernon, New Hampshire, dated at Fort Jessup, Louisiana, June 14th, 1833.

I wrote to Hancock on the 5th of May, and mentioned that wife and Tom-boy had left on May 2nd for Erie, in charge of Lieutenant Morris. He has his wife and boy, Tom, and Captain Harris's lady, who was so fond of Mary. She was going to Louisville, Kentucky; Morris family for Albany and Jane for Erie. They had to go to Orleans for a choice of boats and save the trouble of waiting for a Natchez boat, at least a week. She wrote me from Louisville. She had been frightened into a duck fit, as the steamboat raced with another two days. She expected every moment the boiler would burst. I think it is wrong when ladies are on board, but I like it if only gentlemen are there, and if done in the day time. Lieutenant Morris wrote me from Cincinnati on the 18th of May; all well and stage of water good. So I expect they will go 'via' Pittsburgh. They thought of going 'via' of the canal to Cleveland on Lake Erie. Cannot tell which route they will take. Mary could run all over the house at Natchitoches; would not creep at all. Jane wrote that she was not so much trouble aboard the boats as she anticipated.

We have not had any cholera here yet, but have had some cases near by. Some men took hard up at vomething. I went to see them and I was afraid they would turn themselves wrong side out, and I left them in charge of the doctors. I went to see an officer who was taken suddenly. Many thought he had the cholera and the doctors sent me away. I then called on some ladies; they asked me how the officer was; I told them he was improving. What are they doing for him? asked the lady of the house. I told her, six men were rubbing him when I left, and he was crazy as a brick-bat. Clean yourself, said she, come here when you have just left a cholera man? I started, but stopped at the door, and told her I would come and rub her if she took it from me. She told me to be off; I then cleared out amid a roar of laughter. They rubbed the officer for twenty-four hours with laudanum and camphor. He is now able to walk. There were two cases of it aboard the boat on which they left New Orleans,

which alarmed the girls slightly. As it happened three army surgeons, with whom Jane was acquainted, were on board. Jane expected to see Lieutenant Paige at Orleans, but did not say that she did. General Leavenworth was there but did not see the party. Jane nearly fainted on the street, and had to be taken into a house; they thought at first she had the cholera, but it did not prove so. Lieutenant Morris and lady were with her. She writes she will not return in steamboats, but will come by sea. She is frightened at the racing of steamboats.

I rode out five miles this week into the country with Mrs. Lieutenant Cutts (Jane's cousin) to see Lieutenant Morton's lady of the 7th regiment, and had a real feast of plums besides a good dinner. Aunt Irvine and her niece were there. Lieutenant Morton had gone on business to the state of Mississippi. He was a classmate of mine at Vest Point, and has a beautiful wife.

I think Jane has reached Erie by this time. Little Mary must be tired traveling. When they ask her where her Pa's red hair is, she takes hold of her own hair with both hands. Aunt Irvine writes to Jane by to-morrow's mail (June 16th). I have not heard from Jane since she was at Cincinnati on the 18th of May. She said if it was not for Mary, she would give up the trip in despair. She was about half way; I thought she would get sick of it, but she was very anxious to see her sister, and I could not discourage her.

You write you expected me on this spring; I do not recollect writing that I thought of going before fall. I expect to give you a call then, but something may happen that I cannot go then, may be ordered away with my company, or sent off on a court martial. We expect a post will be established six or eight hundred miles from here among the Choctaw Indians who are moving. It is three hundred miles beyond Fort Towson. The 3rd or 7th regiment will be ordered there to protect them from the Pawnee and Camanche Indians. They are a beautiful set of pups.



Captain Wheeler to Jedadiah Fox, at Hancock, New Hampshire,
calling him, dear brother, dated at Fort Jessup,
Louisiana, August 19th, 1834

We arrived safely on the 12th inst., although very much fatigued. The route we came was eighty-five miles and the roads almost impassable. The wagon was without a cover and a hard seat. The last day's ride of only twenty miles, through the hot sun was severe, and the hottest day of the season. The umbrella was of great use, but heavy to hold. The horses were worn out truck horses but sure. Jane has about gotten over the fatigue, and Mary is quite lively, but was fretful the last day. We did not hear of General Leavenworth's death until we arrived, which reached here a few days previous. It cast a gloom over the place which is depicted in every person's face. He was one of the best officers in the army. He persevered too far. He was determined to bring the Pawnee Indians to a treaty. It was a real drought, hot sun and sickly enough. He had about three hundred dragoons and all the well men of Fort Towson with him on the expedition. They established a post on the Washita River, a hundred miles above Towson, and garrisoned it with the sick; or the post was established before, and all but the sick went thirty miles beyond. He ordered General Dodge with his dragoons to proceed to the Pawnee village and bring in the Indians and send express to him; but he had not heard from him for twenty-seven days. They are fearful he has been cut off, or so sickly they cannot go forward or return, and all their medicines given out. On the death of the General; the next officer ordered all the infantry to go in search of the dragoons, and request the Colonel to return. They think the dragoons are in a horrible situation. The General died with a fever, and his doctor was about as sick as he was at the time, and had not much medicine. The extreme sickness used it up.

Mrs. Leavenworth is a very distressed woman ever since. She was crazy for some time. Aunt Irvine sleeps over with her every night and the ladies spend the day with her. The commanding officer sleeps there also. They dare not sleep without a gentleman in the house. All the officers at Towson are sick but two; it is very sickly there. Aunt Nelson is confined

to her bed with a fever. Cousin Ellen had returned on that account. General Leavenworth sent a dragoon officer to Texas, to request the commanding officer to send the Comanche Indians to treat with him, but he would not on account of the unsettled state of their government. The officer had a fever in Texas and has a severe one here. They (the Indians) range across the two countries. The rest of the dragoons were at Fort Gibson.

We had rather a slow return (I wrote from Alexandria). We had to wait six days twelve miles below the mouth of the Red River, at a small house, for a boat, as boats only run from Orleans, and that boat, the last trip, ran over the falls at Alexandria, but the water was too low.

Captain Nelson is expected down to take command of the Regiment the last of the month. His family will not be able to come with him. An officer will be on this fall to take the command from him. Colonel Many of the 7th will be our Colonel.



Captain Wheeler to his sister, Mrs. Mary Wheeler Kittredge, at Mount Vernon, New Hampshire, dated at Fort Jessup, Louisiana, November 30, 1834.

This is Sunday night and wife and Mary abed, and if Mary could only keep her tongue still, I would write better; telling that her little ducks sleep on a pillow and that the parrot does not stand up and sleep but lays down. And just said when she was a little girl she used to read. This was the eclipse day, and almost total. It was to be quite at Charlestown. Stars were visible.

We have a court martial here, trying Captain Harris for intoxication, and whipping soldiers. But as the order for the court has a mistake in it, I do not think the proceedings will be approved.

I had a letter from Charles the other day. He said it had been very sickly in the country, but that he was well. I believe he is going to get married at last, poor boy. He says he must get married in the spring, or rent his house again. He does not mention her name or anything about her.

Continuing this letter on December 1st, he says: "First

day of winter; this is a great week; Congress meets to-day. I am twenty-five years old on the 4th. (This is evidently intended as a joke, as he is actually thirty-seven) and was married just four years ago to-day.

It is court day in Natchitoches. We sent one soldier in for biting another soldier's ear off; it is a state prison offense. Major DeRussy had his carriage horses shot in town by a citizen for rubbing themselves against his door or house. Both are alive but badly wounded. They sentenced him (the citizen) to pay the state two hundred dollars, and to be confined in jail two months and to pay De Russy all damages. The man is not worth a cent.

I still command company 'H,' although a captain has been transferred to it; Captain Nelson; he is acting major. His family came down from Towson a short time ago. Aunt Nelson and Ellen are quite well. Little Heron has become quite a boy. They have no other children. Uncle and aunt Heron have not yet returned, but expect them every day. I am sorry Captain Nelson has been transferred to company 'H,' as I will have to go to Towson when I am promoted, eight hundred miles by water and three hundred miles by land. Aunt Irvine and Mrs. Cutts send their love to you, Otis:

I have not received a letter from Mount Vernon and but one from Hancock. I had one from aunt Murray of Canada, and they were disappointed at my not calling on them. We have had three letters from Erie. They were all well. They came near losing little Wheeler Pollock by dysentery.



Captain Wheeler to his sister, Mary, dated at Fort Jessup,
Louisiana, October 9th, 1835.

We are all alive and well. Mary is a real romp and grows finely, and as noisy as your children ever were. She goes to school and is more fond of it than her father ever was. Her mother does not have to follow her with a stick. She does not care about learning much. She never fails to be dressed to death for Sunday-School. Miss Elizabeth Pollock Wheeler is quite an active Miss. She will not creep but is learning to stand by chairs. Jane has enjoyed very good health lately. The post

has been very unhealthy this summer. The fever and ague and some fevers have prevailed, but no deaths from either. Some have died of consumption and dropsy.

We have had a few cases of cholera, but none fatal or frightened. Gordon Irvine returned this summer with quick consumption; he bled greatly at the lungs. Aunt Irvine had a tough time with him. He is now able to ride out. Perry Wallace had the fever, and we took him home for about six weeks. He had inflammation of the bowels. He went back to the store and took the fever and ague, but it only holds him four or five hours. Aunts Irvine and Nelson have been quite sick and also cousin Ellen Dexter, but now they are all better and some of them well.

I have not heard from Charles Wheeler since the 21st of May. He was well then and going to be married, but I have not written you since that. I have written to him to-day to inquire how the matter stood and after the health of our new and dear sister, Redman.



Captain Wheeler to "Brother Kittredge," dated at Fort Jessup,
Louisiana, February 22nd, 1836

As this is a great day I must write you. I have written to Mr. Fox, and twice to John Whitcomb to show how we are off for news, and the terrible suspense we are in; wives looking sorry and begin to regret they had taken the button, on account of the wars and rumors of wars. We have been expecting an order every mail for two months, for the Florida war. I see by the papers that the 6th Regiment is ordered here and for what purpose I cannot imagine. Our mails fail six times out of seven, and if war was declared with France, we would stand a thin chance to hear of it by mail. The French require a dressing and if they do not pay over, they will get it, although their navy is, at least, six seventy-fours to our one. Jackson will not yield and I even believe he will have the Senate to assist him. I am convinced that every good citizen will go heart and hand with Jackson for war. If we yield in this case, we may expect every tyrant in the world to pitch on us. We have taken a stand and all

should support and sustain it. Some think, and it is reported, that France is at the point of purchasing Texas. Others say they are making a treaty to let the French troops pass through Texas to attack us; but if they do so we will have war with France and Mexico at the same time. I would not blame Mexico if they did sell to France, as the United States people have been the cause of their wars in Texas, and it would be paying us off in our own coin, in selling to a nation that was at the point of war with us. Speculators are the whole cause of it.

Judge Thompson with his family left here yesterday, after spending a week with us; with three carriages, wife and nine children, bound for Galveston Bay. She a daughter of Governor Thompkins. He sold to the officers here thirty thousand acres of land. I did not put in for it, and hope the Mexicans will drive the Americans out.

Most persons think the object of the 6th Regiment being ordered here, is on the anticipation of their rushing them out, and we will have to disperse and to disarm them. I find all the richest men in the United States own land there; many congressmen besides Jackson and Daniel Webster. The United States will not permit France or any other nation to purchase it.

I am pleased to hear that Georgia and the Carolinas are rushing down upon the Florida Indians. They have about twenty companies of United States troops and three thousand militia. General Scott is there before this on one side and General Gaines on the other. They must do all this spring as they cannot live in the swamps in the summer. Our fleet is there to assist. Bad news came in last night, that a company from Orleans of about seventy-five or eighty men who went out first, were attacked in a heavy rain, and not a rifle would go off, and all were killed. Report says one thousand slaves have joined the Indians, and four hundred white abolitionists. The Southern militia will not take one of them prisoners. They have taken the troops from Baton Rouge, our nearest post. Lieutenant Paige, I see, is gone from New Orleans. The mail is just in, and no further news or orders. The Indian chief, Powel, says he was allowed five years to move in; now he will fight his time out.

Captain Belknap came on and brought Mrs. Leavenworth. He took my quarters and I took two vacant rooms in the same block with Lieutenant McRae. They are not quite so good as my old ones, but they do very well. None of the ladies belonging to the Faction called on Mrs. Leavenworth. She unfortunately mentioned in St. Louis that she hated the whole Faction and a letter to that effect got here just before she arrived. She did not take the trouble of calling on the ladies before she left here and they did not forget it.



Captain Wheeler to his sister, Mrs. Mary Wheeler Kittredge, at Mount Vernon, New Hampshire, dated at Fort Jessup, Louisiana, March 24th, 1836.

We are all well; Mary is very attentive to school, and has a face as large as Colonel Benton's of Missouri, and grows finely. Elizabeth is in pretty good order, as she has a mouthful of teeth and cutting more, and is fourteen months old to-morrow. She is a good child; does not creep and walked yesterday about two yards, and is of course, a smart child. She has more of the Wheeler face than the Wallace, as hers is round, and dark blue eyes. They all say she is my pet. She is liked by every body.

The 6th Regiment from Jefferson Barracks has been in Natchitoches for a fortnight, with orders for this post, and two of their companies have encamped about a mile from this place, and what they were sent here for, I do not know. Papers say to preserve neutrality on the Texas border. They are under the command of General Gaines. I hear that the General has just returned from Florida, and gone to Memphis (his headquarters) and then came here. Some say that the 6th Regiment remains here, and that we go to Fort Gibson. Others that we go to Fort Towson, so we do not know what to think of it. I hope the 6th will go, I do not care where. However the 6th and 3rd will be kept on this Texas line till that cause is settled. It is a bad sign to see more returning from than going to Texas. Many have passed to-day. I had a long talk with one of their captains this morning. He says they think over there that the 6th and 3rd

Regiment will assist them in some way. I told him they could not. They called upon the Colonel to stop the Indians from going over. They are afraid of the Caddos from whom we bought the land last year. Also the Cherokees and even the Seminoles that we are at war with. I told him I thought the latter would be gutted before they could reach Orleans, and the others would not be allowed to go. In our treaty with Mexico we guaranteed to protect them from our Indians. But we do not know the Texan Government as yet, as they declared themselves independent this month, with Santa Anna on the Southern border with nine thousand Mexican troops and there are five times that number of Indians holding off for the strongest or successful party. The report came in to-night that San Antonio, Texas had been taken and all their throats cut, which is true without doubt. David Crockett is one of the number of one hundred and fifty. More than Santa Anna's army have passed this post; enough to whip him. He proclaimed, and even through their papers, that he would be there in March with ten thousand men, and give no quarters. Why the Texans want then to meet them I cannot imagine. The Lieutenant Governor called on all the militia after San Antonio was besieged by an advance guard. Jane's brother was not in the Fort but near it. He was at the taking of the same place two or three months ago.

Report came in yesterday that General Gaines had given the Indians in Florida a real flogging; killed three hundred of them, but the particulars were not mentioned. I fear that many of our officers and men were killed. I hope the militia have retrieved their characters in soldiership, as I cannot say much for them in the Florida fights.

I have not had a letter from Charles Wheeler for four or five months, he was well then, which was, I think, the only letter he has written since he took himself a wife. Jane and I both have written to our new sister. I have written to John Whitcomb often to let them know that I expect an order every mail for Florida, and ready to start with my company for the war. Aunt Irvine's son, Gordon, is about returning from Matanzas, and is about well of the consumption. Major Heron and wife have just left here. He goes to purchase goods in New

York, and she to see her son in Pennsylvania. He left John Irvine (Jane's cousin) and Perry Wallace (Jane's brother) to board with us, and in charge of the store. Major Heron said he would give sixteen dollars a month each for their board, and I told him I would not ask him more.



Captain Wheeler to Brother and Sister, addressed to Zephaniah Kittredge, at Mount Vernon, New Hampshire, dated at Fort Jessup, Louisiana, May 24th, 1836

Now as to wars and rumors of wars. We all have come to the conclusion not to believe anything, as we have contradictory reports daily as relates to Texas. The Texans had been frightened half to death and many wholly so by report that one division of Santa Anna's army was within fifteen miles of Nacogdoches and brought ten thousand Indians who were murdering and burning as they came, and all put out. The distress was great. Thousands of men, women and children came to the Sabine River and crossed over for days to our side. I saw many of my acquaintances who state the scene was distressing. Many women with four or five children, entirely exhausted, walking up to their knees in mud. One man gave a woman his horse and put the old lady in the saddle with one child before and two behind. I presume that not a panic ever took place on so large a scale as that, in North America. General Gaines was in Natchitoches and immediately ordered out fourteen companies to the Sabine River, out of sixteen here. He left my company and one of the 6th Regiment. So here we are, and there are they. All got tired of the trip. General Gaines is with them and has three picked guards, nine, five and three miles off.

One has to wade where the water is four feet deep. The fact is Texas was completely conquered except General Houston's small army, and they retreating. But as fortune would have it, Santa Anna who is dictator and of course law and gospel with the Mexicans, took a lower route near Harrisburgh on Galveston Bay with a thousand men, and as it happened, met Houston's army unexpectedly, and they gave him a volley of rifle shots, and killed about half, the first clip, and then the devil was

to pay, as they could not stand the second shot, and put out. Houston had burned down the bridge in the rear and completely shut up all in a heap, rivers and creek on all sides. Then it was with them pull Dick and pull Devil, as neither could get away. Santa Anna found he had to run, so he and staff and one general, Almonte, put out, and found the bridge gone, and the river a mile wide. So they took to a swamp. The Texans guarded the swamp all night. Troops stood in four feet of water, and in the morning they charged in and found Santa Anna on a log and took him to the camp. His army who were prisoners, on entering hurrahed for Santa Anna, which exposed him. So writes an acquaintance of mine who was in the fight.

A Mr. Thompson who came here with his family, whose wife was the daughter of Governor Thompkins of New York, in three carriages, went down towards Galveston Bay. He being agent in a New York land company. Letters came here yesterday to the commanding officer, begging him to send an officer to take care of his family. He had a daughter of eighteen, a fine looking and accomplished young lady. One of our officers happened in here who was rather partial to the girl and immediately returned to General Gaines' camp, and the General told him he could go. Thompson sent timber for a house and mills, all of which Santa Anna's army burned at Galveston Bay.

News came to-day that the Florida war is not over. That Fort Drane had been attacked and twenty United States soldiers killed, but the particulars are not known. That General Scott was centured by the inhabitants for leaving the territory unprotected. That many inhabitants were murdered and plantations destroyed; one belonging to General Lynch. So I think we all stand a thin chance of going to Florida yet, and probably soon. Jane says it will be the same as sending me to the grave. I never have much tender anticipations, as I have lived ten years longer than I expected. I consider, however, now that I am married, that my life is worth much more. Jane will go to her sister in Pennsylvania, if I am ordered off.

Gordon Irvine has returned from Cuba, and remained here until last week. He began to fail and aunt thought it best for him to visit Virginia Springs, or go to sea. She could not

leave him and has gone to Orleans. They may go to Boston, and if so, I told them by all means to visit Hancock and Mount Vernon. They will call on cousin Dickinson in Boston if they go there. Aunt is, you know, Jane's and my guardian. Jane's cousins, Lieutenant Crossman and lady, came on here with the 6th, and is quartermaster. He received an order last week to go to New Orleans to build quarters. Mrs. Crossman is Jane's own cousin and has three children. He expects a furlough.

Report came to-day that David Crocket's son, who is in General Houston's army, was so wrathy at the Mexicans that in the fight he was for killing the whole lot, after they had surrendered, and General Houston had to confine him in order to hold him.

I understand that nine companies are on the march from Gibson to Towson; but they are not wanted now. Two twelve pounders and powder enough to blow us to Davy Jones' came last week from Orleans and Jefferson Barracks, besides all kinds of shot and shell. I hope they will shoot General Santa Anna, if yesterday's report is true, that he ordered Colonel Fannin's party shot after his general had accepted their capitulation, with the understanding that they were to be sent to the states. As it was done the day after Santa Anna reached there, it must have been done by him.



Captain Wheeler to his sister, Mrs. Mary Wheeler Kittredge, at
Mount Vernon, New Hampshire, dated at Fort Jessup,
Louisiana, July 14th, 1836.

General Houston and his surgeon general and staff major, stopped here part of two days and one night. His wound is quite painful. The ball passed between the bones above the ankle and splinters came out. He heard of the landing of eight to ten thousand Mexican troops when he was here. He said that was bad business, but he said there was nothing to eat in Texas, and he would stop their provision wagons by setting on the Camanche Indians to steal their horses, and would block them in that way. He says he only wants a few men to drive them out of the country. I am afraid he will not be able to take

the field. He had Santa Anna's saddle, bridle and cane here. It is stated that they are trimmed with gold, but the plates are brass washed with gold. The embroidery is gold, and I think the stirrups are also, as they are very heavy.

Houston says that when Colonel Fannin was cut off, an express brought in the report which alarmed his men so much they were running off. He told them the express was a spy, and that he had confined him and said he would have him shot in the morning. He said he knew he was lying and hoped the Lord would forgive him. It saved his men and his battle took place shortly after. He said he made a short speech to his army the moment before the action, and wound up with the words in a loud voice; remember the Alamo and Fannin. And they rushed on like a set of tigers, howling like Indians. Without doubt those words DID strike such a panic as to completely unman the Mexicans. They were determined to retaliate by the complete butchery that followed after a few first shots. They did not slaughter the right ones. I have heard a number of ladies abusing a colonel of Houston's army for shooting a woman and I presume it is in the papers. I asked one of Houston's officers about it, and he said she had a Mexican uniform coat and cap on, and in the high grass, which was the cause of the mistake in the sex. She was a Mexican soldier's wife. (The foregoing, of course, refers to the battle of Jan Jacinto.)

It is astonishing what has been done to excite people against Mexicans, not only by the land-holders and speculators of Texas, but by the people of the States. The case of Lieutenant Dickinson's lady, which I was sorry to see in the Patriot, with VARIATIONS, was not correct. Many of her acquaintances who have seen her, and been well acquainted before and after the Alamo fight, were astonished when I asked them the question. They said she spoke in the highest terms of the Mexican commander, as to her protection. She has her child. The fact is our army had to rush to the Sabine on the report of a gentleman (we knew) instead of waiting to see if Mexicans and Indians WERE burning and killing all to the Sabine. Why did they not stop and fight; or wait to see even if there WERE any Indians? Gentlemen tell me that the panic was so great that men even

threw or pushed women and children out of the boats to get in themselves to cross the river. All that has passed, and let it go.

General Gaines is still on the river with fourteen companies. He had teams to march to Nacogdoches, and something prevented. (He keeps everything in the dark.) This week it is equally again, as he said he would only leave a small guard here. So JONAH with 'H' company would have to go, and also Captain Lewis' company, which makes the girls scold a little. And to make the thing more pointed, has sent a hundred barrel of flour and twenty of pork to Nacogdoches. Then thought we; over we go; but an order came yesterday from Washington, to send all the provisions to Florida and Alabama. An express was sent to General Gaines; but he directed to send only half of it; the provisions to Natchitoches, and corn; many steamboat loads. The dragoons at Fort Leavenworth are ordered here, and those from Towson have not yet arrived. I believe six or eight companies of Infantry are coming with them. The latter are I believe, to come to Nacogdoches through Texas, and I hope those provisions are for them and not for me and 'H.' The General issued an order which, if you saw it in the papers, would make you think we were in a bad pickle; issued yesterday. That owing to troubles or difficulties, no party can leave more than two miles without an escort of two hundred Infantry or a hundred and fifty dragoons. I mention this for fear that you might see it in the paper. If we are troubled with the Indian fever, it will be from and about Texas, and then when all make a rush and a real one, with Mexicans, joined by Indians; even then there will be no danger at this post. We do not hear where the Mexican troops are, but if they approach we will see plenty rushing out as before, to tell the news instead of remaining to fight.

Now the worst is to be told. My own sisters have written to Jane about her brother in Texas, and I saw her answers, "that she was afraid to inquire." He wrote to me often when aid to General Houston, and when he left the General, he told me he had done so, which I was sorry to hear. He was comissioned Captain of artillery, and afterwards Major. I have many acquaintances passing to and from Texas, and got them to make particular inquiries about Wallace, and one, on his return ascer-

tained that he had marched a detachment to join Fannin. Then I heard of their fate, but knew some had made their escape, and was in hopes that Major Wallace was one of them, but found he was one of the sufferers. All were ordered out to get wood. These parties were shot by a body of soldiers who were placed by the side of the road, with exception of about a dozen who escaped, and Wallace was one of those killed. Santa Anna was, without doubt, the murderer. Murderer, because a capitulation was made in good faith by General Urea, as I have been told by persons present. (Although Urea denies it) that they were to be sent to Orleans; signed by Urea, Fannin and Wallace. The man I saw was sent to me by a friend of mine in Texas. He is a respectable man of property. Urea saved him (the man of property) for a while to attend on the murder, which was to bring Fannin's sick and wounded out to be shot, (delightful business). Fannin was wounded and he was brought out and shot in his chair.

We heard that at first Urea's command refused to execute the order, but I asked this man if the officers appeared to be willing to execute the order, and he said yes, that he was with them then and afterwards for a week. He stole a horse when on the way to Matagorda and put off. Mrs. Pollock had seen the account in the paper, of her brother. Mr. Pollock and wife wrote to me and said they must know the worst. I kept the papers from Jane until I could collect facts, and the day this letter arrived I asked her brother, who is here (Perry) and had not spoken of Wallace more than Jane had, what part of Texas his brother was in, and he said he expected he was with Fannin. He had seen the paper but did not speak of him. Mrs. Pollock had always been uneasy about his being in the Texan army, and expressed her surprise that we had not spoken of him. For my part I was only waiting for facts. Poor Jane, I showed her the letter and she read it, and I asked her what I should say. She said she did not know where he was, and then I had to tell her that he was with Colonel Fannin; the first time she had heard of it. She was very much distressed. She knew the fate of that command, but did not know her brother was there. She wanted to know why I did not tell her before. I told her many had escaped, and

I had some hopes, till within a few days, that he was one of them. The report confined her to her bed for some days. Dr. Ewing, Houston's surgeon general, stopped with us. He was from Erie, and was with Wallace till he marched for Fannin's command. Jane was well acquainted with him. The Government of Texas is very unsettled. They released Santa Anna and sails were hoisted to put out, but the people stopped him. If Mexico does not acknowledge the independence of Texas he will be shot. All the troops they can send him will not save him. General Houston said he would have him brought to Nacogdoches or San Antonio.

We had a letter from aunt Irvine. Gordon was better and under charge of Dr. Jackson of Philadelphia. They, I hope, will give you a call before they return. Lieutenant Bonnell has gone to Nacogdoches to hire store houses for our provisions. John Irvine has gone to Washington to get a commission in one of the new regiments, if raised. He and Perry Wallace have the sanction and request of all the officers of this regiment. General Gaines told Wallace that he knew his father well, and that he would do anything for him. It has cost more for the transportation of Major Heron's goods the last twenty-five miles than from New York to Natchitoches. He has so many that the freight alone cost ten thousand dollars. Officers are just in from camp and say the General will not pass over the river.



Captain Wheeler to John Whitcomb, Mrs. L. Whitcomb and
Mrs. Tuttle, at Hancock, New Hampshire, dated at
Fort Jessup, Louisiana, May 8th, 1837.

We received your letters of last week, and Jane says she is not feeling very well and that I must answer her part for the present. Our mails fail at all times, but now they have them brought in boats. Our boat and mail burned lately. So we must give some correspondence credit for letters therein. I did not expect any news but bad, so I did not trouble myself much about the loss of the mail. Report says the 6th Regiment came here and the 3rd went to Towson, which alarmed us some, particularly those who had families and not much money. But the later and

correct report is rather squally. That the new Regiment of Dragoons has letters by the dozen directed to this post office, and an invoice of four thousand horse shoes for this post came last mail, and letters say they will come, but not where we will go. The seven companies of the 6th are still in Florida, and three on the Sabine. So I conclude if I had gone with them as I was ordered, I would have been there now. But I believe they did not get into a fight, but came near it, as two regiments were ordered to take two routes to a certain point, and the other regiment got as much as they wanted of fight before they arrived at the point. General Macomb wrote to the commanding officer here and at the Sabine, last mail to know if it would be a good place for dragoons at these two points as to cost of furage, &c., also to send an officer to survey the Sabine to its mouth, and report the cost of clearing out said river. Also what kind of boats could navigate it. I understand that one of the two reported that it would be tough times for horses in this pine woods.

Colonel Twiggs of the 2nd Regiment of Dragoons is a very popular officer at Washington and wants his Regiment at New Orleans or the nearest post from there. We can tell better in a few days what will be our fate. As for Texas news, we have none. All appear to agree that they do not expect any trouble from the Mexicans. Emigration is great to Texas, and if they do not attack the Texans before June is out, the Mexicans may as well give up the scrape, or sell out. Though they give up Texas they will have another Texas war in ten years, which will take off another slice as large as Texas and trouble Mexico twice as much. (Wonderfully prophetic)

Persons are passing here every day, but more are organized into companies. They carry a good rifle, pistols and knives, and look as though they were full of fight. But provisions there are scarce and dear. Most of them are cooled down before they travel a week in the land of promise.

Camp news is not much. We were all disappointed that the army bill could not pass. We want more pay and more men. Resignations have been great since the bill failed. I conclude the want of more pay to support their children has caused eight camp women to quit their husbands within a fortnight, and six

of them are sergeants. Republicans of the North want sergeants promoted to officers. Their ladies would be good society for ours. Half a dozen of us got our commissions last mail from Jackson, and they now require us to be sworn in, since nullification times, but we have no justice within twenty-five miles. So I will have to trudge to Natchitoches, which I dislike. I have not been there but once in two and a half years; I dislike the place so much.

The mail is just in and confirms the report that the 2nd Regiment of Dragoons is ordered here. We find it in the Army and Navy Chronicle. Jane had a letter from her sister. They were well. She says Wheeler, her oldest boy, is a real yankee. He ought to be as he was called after me. Lieutenant Cady is here and ordered to survey the Sabine River, as I mentioned in this letter. He is stationed at the Sabine, and belongs to the 6th Regiment. You must know him; a son of Alba Cady. He is in here for an outfit for the trip. He promised to send me an otter skin in a few days.

Poor aunt Irvine is much distressed and about worn out with constant attention on Gordon. He is reduced to nothing, as it were. Poor fellow, his legs are not larger than my wrist, and he was formerly as large as I was when last in Hancock. He is so weak that he can hardly throw off what he raises. I thought yesterday he would choke to death. 12th: You must excuse me for neglect in this writing, as Gordon Irvine required all my attention. Poor fellow; he was buried to-day, with all the officers and ladies in attendance. I sat up with him until half past four; daylight here, and he died at seven. He did not expect to live but a few days, but I had no idea that his time was limited to this morning.

An officer is just from New Orleans and says that the seven companies of the 6th are ordered to the Sabine River, and two regiments of artillery. The 2nd Dragoons go to Jefferson Barracks to drill. I think the Secretary of War has a fellow feeling for Mexico, as he was minister there.

Report came to-day that two thousand militia were ordered here, but I do not believe it. The Texas people can take care of themselves.

Captain Wheeler to brother Zeph, Mr. Zephaniah Kittredge, Jr
at Mount Vernon, New Hampshire, dated at Fort
Jessup, Louisiana, May 16th, 1837.

I wrote to Hancock three days ago and mentioned the death of Gordon Irvine, who died on the 12th. I set up with him and left at daylight. Cousin Gordon Murray was also with him. He died about seven the same morning. Aunt Irvine bears her loss with a great deal of fortitude. She has been all attention, night and day for years, and how she stood it I cannot imagine, with loss of rest every night. He was reduced to a mere shaddow. He spent a year in Cuba and another at sea and Philadelphia for his health, but all would not do. A young man came here lately from Virginia, having taken a severe cold on the deck of the ship, being sea-sick, went on deck and now he is in the last stage of what we call galloping consumption. He is a cousin of Lieutenant Macrae. Our two surgeons are very attentive. Dr. Craig was all attention to Gordon while he was sick.

This young man has just died. His name is Macrae and about nineteen years old, and son of a widow. This will be distressing news for her. He was going to Texas to purchase land. A good many are going over to settle, but I do not see any companies. The Texans think they can whip all the Mexicans that can be sent against them, but we do not hear of the Mexicans this side of Matamoras. The Texans are much alarmed about the Indians, and should they unite they could drive all the Texans out. Times look rather squally about here, but I hope war will not be declared against Mexico. The Naches, sloop of war, has had a scrape there already, which you have, of course, seen. Tents have been sent here to-day for our command and turned over to companies, which has not been done since I belonged to the army. Two or three regiments of artillery have been ordered to the Sabine River. The seven companies of the 6th Infantry are also ordered there from Florida. Captain Wright is near here with recruits to fill our companies. So we are in doubt as to what is rotten in Denmark. We do not apprehend any danger. The object probably is to protect our inhabitants from the

Indians, We, however, can tell better in a few days. I see by the papers that General Gaines wants the gallant 1st, 3rd and 6th to be stationed at the mouth of the Withlacoochee River in Florida, and to move every ten or twelve days into the country to hunt Indians. I hope he will not get them, as it would be a sweet summer residence, in the swamps, even if there were no hostile Indians. Major Heron is just up from New Orleans and says they had not heard there that the Indian war was closed. So it would take more than yankee guessing to tell what is to be done with our regiment.

I had a letter from Charles Wheeler a short time ago. He seems to be doing well, Both he and Jane's brother, Gordon, complain, as they do throughout the world, that the money market is in a bad fix. We can feel it here as we have two paymasters and not much allowed by government. I was very sorry the bill before this Congress had not passed, as its object was to increase the officers and men's pay, and to increase the companies to seventy-five or a hundred men, instead of fifty-one. Most of my company is Irish and Dutch; many of them are good men, but I would prefer our own people.

Half a dozen of us have our commissions sent on, and we have no justice of the peace to swear us in. I have had two commissions before and never swore allegiance to the United States. It was not done until the South Carolina Nullification took place, although it is the law. Jane Murray is here with us still; she is a fine girl. Her brother is in Major Heron's store. We are back in the old quarters we lived in when I left for New Hampshire. They appear like old times. They have only one story and four rooms, two are bed-rooms. The Kitchen, as before, is a little far off. It was choice that I moved, not turned out of quarters as before. It is time for the funeral and I must attend. The mail closes shortly and it is time for the other to come in. Should it bring any news I will mention it before I seal this.

The mail is in and brought no extra news, only most of our officers are ordered here, and the recruiting service in this Western Department is broken up; just as I expected, as those officers cannot get even Irish or Dutch.

Captain Wheeler to Dear Sir, John Whitcomb, Esq., Postmaster at Hancock, New Hampshire, dated at Fort Jessup, Louisiana, October 13th, 1837

For fear you would think we were eaten up by the negroes, I will scratch you a few lines as the mail closes soon. The blacks had agreed to rise on the inhabitants last Saturday about Alexandria, eight miles below, but a trusty slave or black informed on them, and they sent for our troops. The Colonel sent a hundred men (two companies) who are half way down by this time, by land, with orders to Major Reilly's three companies at Camp Sabine, my company and Captain Bainbridge's here, to be ready at a moment's warning to follow. I got my axes and hatchets ground up and was ready in a few hours. I told the Commanding Officer that there was more talk than cider. He said the application was strong; signed by the most respectable and wealthy of the state. They hung four and had many more confined. The leaders were well treated. One said he was going to kill his master to get his wine. Another had the use of his master's carriages and horses when he wished. Both treated well, and were the leaders. Some say that ten thousand were engaged in the plot.

Our surgeon happened to be there on furlough at the time but he met an order ordering him back with Lieutenant Bonnell's command. So I had but a moment to talk with him. The Dr. says all they want is to show the blacks that troops can be brought there in a short time. Jane was afraid I would have to go, but 'H' company was last on detail. They have the yellow fever there I expect, pretty heavy. An officer came up from there last week and said they had it. A citizen came and said it was the fever of the country, as they told him. Our surgeon just from there says it is healthy there, but I knew by his reply to me, depicted in his face, that the yellow fever was not slow. We apprehend no danger from it.

As for the Florida war, we do not get much information about it. I see Congress is fighting the war themselves. I wish they would bring it to a close, and that those who have abused the army would take a tour of pleasure to see how they like the

location; yellow fevers and congestive fevers in the summer and floods in the winter.

A citizen came in yesterday and said that the Mexican President is on his way to invade Texas with twenty thousand men. If so there will be another splatterfication among the people.



Mrs. Wheeler, addressed to, My dear Mary, Mary Wheeler Kittredge, at Mount Vernon, New Hampshire, dated at Fort Jessup, Louisiana, May 19th, 1838.

My boy was one of the crossest children I ever saw, until he was six months old. He now sits alone and is pretty good. (Evidently referring to her son, Wallace Wheeler.) With my sewing and a cross boy I have been kept pretty busy. Mr. Wheeler has written that aunt Irvine and cousin Hannah Cutts had left this in March.

I heard from aunt Irvine in Louisiville. They got that far safely. Hannah had gone on to Washington City to visit the friends of Mr. Cutts, and intended staying where she was until the middle of June. From there she will go to Pennsylvania to visit her old friends. She will spend some time with my sister in Waterford.

Mary had a party on the first of the month. It was her birth day. She is six years old. She invited all the children in camp. They danced from tea time until nine o'clock at night. They had cake, lemonade and sugar plums. Mary attends school regularly and begins to write. Elizabeth also goes to school. She came in the other day from school and told me that Mr. Bonnel had a long tailed blue. I found out at last that it was a peacock she ment; it was the first one she had ever seen and she did not know what it was.

Three or four of the ladies from Natchitoches came yesterday on a visit. Some stopped at Major Nelson's and some at Mr. Macrae's. They were old acquaintances of mine, so I was obliged to give up all work for the day and be as attentive to them as I could. Mrs. Macrae gave them a party in the evening. I had to go as there are so few ladies at the post.

I suppose you have seen accounted in the papers of the terrible steamboat accidents. It is dangerous to travel on the Ohio or Mississippi Rivers now adays, I do not remember the name of the last boat; she was a new one, and it was her first trip. The captain felt anxious to show his boat off to the best advantage in passing Cincinnati. He stopped above the place to take in a family off a flat boat. He held on the steam all the time, and as he turned the boat to start, the boiler burst and blew off the whole of the front part of the boat. There were a hundred and twenty five persons killed and missing. Major Fowl of the 6th Regiment and Dr. Huea of the army were among the number. There appears to be a fatality attending the majors of that Regiment. They have lost four in a few months. Some of the bodies of the poor creatures that went on the boat, were blown up into the streets of Cincinnati, most shockingly mangled. Among the rest was the captain of the boat. Another boat blew up a short time before, and killed fifty persons. The boat cousin Ellen was in lost a number. It makes me shudder when I think of going on a boat.

It is said that the Florida war is over. I hope it may be the case, for I am so much afraid of Mr. Wheeler going. The order was out at one time for the 3rd and 5th to go, but it was countermanded, and the other three companies of the 6th that were stationed out at Camp Sabine were sent. Poor fellows, I pitied them when they marched by this on their way to Natchitoches to take a boat for Florida. They were to leave town to-day at twelve o'clock.

Cousin Gordon Murray has just come in; he wishes to be remembered to you. I had a letter from Perry to-day. He is in a store in Natchitoches. He has applied for an appointment in the army. I hardly know whether I want him to get it or not; the army stands so low now. We have heard to-day that the bill for increasing the army and the pay has lassed. I hope it may be so, but I hardly think it can be true; there must be some mistake about it. It is too good news to believe.

I had a long letter from my sister last mail. They were all well. She was about sending two of her boys to Erie to attend school. They will stay with Mrs. Wilkins. Captain

Wheeler adds a note. "The army bill is to increase a company from fifty-one to seventy-five, but I have forty-five now and do not want any more rascals. I have no officer here and often command two companies, and some times the post. My company is already in a new block: Our two companies are at the mouth of the Sabine River."



Captain Wheeler to Brother Zeph, Mr. Zephaniah Kittredge,
at Mount Vernon, New Hampshire, dated at Fort
Smith, Arkansas, December 13, 1838.

I have been here a week to-day. I had to leave my family at Jessup because the Arkansas and Red Rivers were too low for steamboats, and I could not trust them over these bad roads by land at this season of the year, as had it rained much there would have been a hundred places where the horses would had to swim. As it was I had no rain and got along very well. The carriage road is 'via' Little Rock and Washington. We have two roads besides, that one over the Arkansas Mountains, the highest and the most rocky I ever saw. It also runs by Washington as well as the third, and goes 'via' Fort Towson and over some prairie land and many mountains. I took the middle road over the mountains 'via' Zebulon or Murfreesborough, and except a turn to Washington, it is nearly directly North from Jessup. Most of the inhabitants on the road in the Arkansas part, are squatters on United States land which is not surveyed. The houses all the way were from twelve to twenty-five miles apart and only one room. So that travelers and the family with the dogs and cats had to sleep in that room. It is said that there are murderers and horse thieves in both states on the road, but they did not trouble me. I had one pistol loaded and put it in the saddle bags. The other I carried all the way in my pocket and did not know the mistake until I got here. A great many people were out hunting bear for the fat and meat, but I did not happen to see any.

I left Jessup on Thursday, the 22nd of November and arrived here on the 7th of December, the second Thursday, without hardly any fatigue except the first two days. We generally

find coffee but no sugar; even then it went well as I had a great appetite, and have a good one now. I do not think very much of our market yet; we have venison, eggs, butter and chickens. The Indians have large farms and own many negroes and I conclude, as good neighbors as those about Jessup. Major Belknap is here in command. He has our two companies encamped about three quarters of a mile from Fort Smith and the same distance from the Arkansas and Poteau Rivers, and in the angle. We are now in tents but will have our quarters finished by New Years. I hope so, as I do not like tents on account of the smoke in cold weather and the heat in hot weather. We are digging and blasting a well and have gotten thirty-three feet deep and about fifteen feet through slate stone and now it fills three feet in a night. They have about eighty hands from Maine at work getting out material, etc. to build Fort Smith. Now there are only a few huts there. It will take three or four years to complete it; it is to be built of brick. One company of the 7th Infantry is there. Fort Coffee eight miles above is broken up, and that company has gone to the Illinois River, forty miles from here, where a new post is to be built and where the great Indian Council was held. We heard that the 4th Infantry had put back to grab the last of the Cherokees in Carolina. They are to relieve the 7th who go to Florida. If they have removed fifteen thousand Cherokees, as the papers state, I think we have enough without those from Carolina; and they have three hundred fighting men in Texas that keep the Texans in constant fear. Their land is within rifle shot of our camp, although I have been here a week and not seen one.

I am told that four hundred Seminoles have been landed this side of Little Rock and they are coming up by land, and were expected some days ago. I find this a first-rate place for hunting, but there is no shot in the place, nor will not be until the boats run. I killed three ducks and a pigeon yesterday and have three charges of shot left, and must make the best of it to-morrow. The Arkansas is quite low, but a little rise a fortnight ago brought up two small boats here and one going down. There are many more below Little Rock waiting for a rise. I do not know how Jane will get here. I expect some officers will

come from there, as three soldiers, one with a wife, are coming. One is an old acquaintance of Jane; he was my orderly sergeant for years. She has two servants to bring, and if both rivers are up, she will have to only change boats once at Naches. She may come with Major Nelson's family, to the mouth of the Arkansas River, as they talk of taking a furlough this winter. How I wish they were here. My boy is large enough to pick up leaves and he would have enough to do at that, as we are in an open woods, but the under growth has been cleared out. The boy could walk a few steps when I left Jessup. I think Jane would like this place if she were here. Mary would be delighted as we have plenty of hickory nuts and it is only a few minutes walk to Fort Smith (town) and boats are there about half the year with every good thing from Orleans and the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers.

Mrs. Cutts is still in Washington, and has another daughter. Her brother is in Texas and her mother in Pennsylvania. She was over to Mr. Murray's in Canada this fall. A letter mailed two days before I left Jessup came here yesterday, five or six days after I did, so it takes one twenty days to come. I came here on horseback in fifteen days and brought a soldier along, as Jane was afraid to have me come alone, on account of my health, swimming creeks and dangerous inhabitants. We have three large roads leading past our camp and two beautiful prairies near by, so that we can have good riding and hay cutting. I have not seen the Indian Farms but I must soon. We have two officers' ladies in the Fort or town, besides many merchant's and farmer's ladies; said to be very respectable, but I have not seen them. The sutler is going to have his family on soon, so Jane will not be alone. Major Belknap has applied for a chaplain to preach and keep school. Jane will be pleased to hear it. To show how much alarmed we are about Indians, we do not keep a cartridge in camp; all over in town. I do not think it is more than four hundred miles the way I came.

Sally wanted to know why they objected to Mr. Cutts being buried in the garden. Some thought he ought to be buried in the burial field, when one part was allotted for officers and gentlemen who had died there and the other for soldiers, but they

did not say much about it, though thought it the most proper place for officers. As only ladies and officer's children were buried in the garden, with the exception of Gordon Irvine, was their objection. As Gordon, Jane Murray and dear little Elizabeth were in a line, I would not listen to any other place..



Captain Wheeler to John Whitcomb, Esq., Postmaster at Hancock, New Hampshire, dated at Fort Smith, Arkansas,

May 20th, 1839

My paper of same date has not yet arrived, as four came together. We take the Orleans, Washington and New York papers, all Whig. I voted for them to accommodate the officers, who are Whigs, but the papers are the MEANEST printed in those cities. Your paper mentioned a fuss here among the Indians, which was not known at this place. But the week it arrived, there was something like it, as the Lieutenant in command of a company at the Illinois, sixty miles from here, and also from Gibson, got information that the garrison was to be attacked by Indians that night (about three weeks ago) and sent an express to Gibson. The General sent four companies of Dragoons there in the night. One fellow said they killed six horses, and after all it was a false alarm. Since that half a dozen rowdies dressed themselves "a la Indian" at Van Buren, six miles from here; took a fellow and lynched him "a la Arkansas" and all the town considered themselves murdered by Indians, more particularly the old women.

Two of our officers, out of the three here, happened to be there. We had a good laugh over it. The Choctaws got into a big spree which lasted for some days, whooping and howling, the chief was as drunk as a coon, and swore he would hobble all of Belknap's road party, because he did not run the road by his house. Lieutenant Glenn went to his house at the time and asked how his liquor held out. They do not mind or care more about the danger of Indians between here and town than so many chips. They have not even a musket on the road, and we have not had a cartridge in the Garrison since I came here, we keep them in town, a mile off. The wind blew our gun house down

the other day, and I sent and had two six pounders brought over here, but left their ammunition there. When the recruits, which have been expected for some time from New York arrive, I will make a gun house, trim the trees on the parade ground and hoe up the grass. Then I will send them on the road. They are rushing it hard up. They have about seventy miles on this side and thirty on the other. Captain Morris and his company are on the farther end, and crossing the Seven Devils Mountain, like the one near Jerry Eaton's in Hancock.

The new Fort begins to show itself a little above the ground; getting a steam sawmill into operation for Fort building. I have but twenty men here of my company and four of Major Belknap's. Captain Bonnell now of the 8th Infantry came this way with recruits for Towson, and returning spent a few days with us, and left here for Jessup. He is the officer that Jane and myself think so much of. We have his black girl. He left Jessup in August last for the 8th and has paid upwards of four thousand dollars since for doctor's bills for his negroes in Mississippi and Louisiana. He is very kind to them. I sold my Becky for six hundred dollars to Mr. True of New Hampshire at Natchitoches, and she died the other day with consumption. He cannot recover anything from me, as it was not known she had it. Nor do I believe now that it was the cause of her death, as having made a new dress, she put it on and said she would lie down until dinner time. When they called her she was dead. My Lieutenant, Chandler, went with Bonnell to Towson and returned here to stay. So we have here at this post two lieutenants, a doctor and three ladies. Lieutenant Henry is commissary; Mrs. Henry is a niece of Governor Thompkins of New York. They go on furlough when the road party returns. He has had trouble enough with the Gibson prisoners. The rascals stole three barrels of flour last night which was left on the wharf.

Miss Wilkins is a great acquisition to our little society. Jane is perfectly delighted now that she is here. We have a good cow and calf and keep a horse. We have strawberries by the bushel. Aunt Irvine and Mrs. Cutts are at Jessup. They are going to live with John Irvine at Galveston in Texas.

Major Nelson is promoted to the 7th Regiment and I expect he will have to join his regiment in Florida, but do not know. The Colonel says he will have our two companies here, go to Shreveport, sixty miles above Jessup to build a Fort, but I have moved enough with a large family.



Captain Wheeler to Sister Eliza, Miss Eliza Wheeler, at Hancock, New Hampshire, dated at Fort Smith, Arkansas,
September 13th, 1840.

This is our unhealthy season, as it is generally called, but our family has been quite well, except that Jane has the jaw-ache, which I think is the toothache. Two doctors have examined it and say the tooth is sound. Splinters came out of my jaw often when the dentist pulled out a jawbreaker at St. Louis in 1831. Isabel our girl, had the fever and ague to-day, but they do not last long here. I have only five sick in 'H' company some with chills. Lieutenant Henry has the same and is quite sick. Mrs. Henry had a daughter the other day that weighed eleven pounds, a little larger than Clara was at her age. We have a school here now kept by the sergeant major we had at Jessup. The town was too far away for Mary, though Wallace attends at all times. Clara is teething and has been more fretful the last two days than all her life. She has cut two, and two more is enough if they should be as troublesome as mine were. Major Thomas has orders to discontinue the post and discharge his hands, which will make Arkansas scold. However they have expended forty thousand dollars, as I am told; more than last years appropriation. The work is only suspended until March. Barracks are of stone and quarters of brick.

Captain Armstrong has arrived here with about two hundred thousand dollars to pay the Cherokee and other Indians, and our kind and humane citizens are taking them plenty of whiskey to meet the money. An officer is just from Gibson and says they have had trouble there already, and General Arbuckle sent a command from Gibson to whiskeize them. Besides we have at least fifty gamblers in town; real black-legs, waiting to grab their share in their professional way. I wish they would

go to Vicksburgh and let them have another hanging scrape. We have had more than twenty of them all summer. It is a disgrace to the town. We have no gambling in the garrison, nor do the officers play these days. Captain Macrae is able to ride and walk on his wooden leg. He has left here with his family in a steamboat. He has orders for the recruiting service at New York, and expects to be stationed in Virginia, near his friends. We regret Mrs. Macrae leaving here. She is a great crony of ours. Her daughter and Mary were great friends, and always together. Lieutenant Vose with about twenty men will escort this Indian money to Gibson, in a day or two. He is over-anxious to go, as he says he will get sick if he does not have a trip of this kind. Captain Morris was over here last week with his daughter, and I was told Vose was very much smitten with her when he was stationed at Towson. She is quite a lady and rather pretty. We had not seen her since we were at Albany. Mary Wilkins and Jane were anxious to see Mrs. Lieutenant Dobbins, who is at Towson and from Erie.

I believe there has not been many murders since I wrote, among the citizens in town, and the other side of the River. Two men drowned about that time. One fell from a hay stack in town while asleep or drunk, probably both. A white man who had a squaw wife was shot by an Indian. He was a great rascal. Some years ago the commanding officer of Fort Smith had some words with him, and this fellow threw a four pound weight, and nearly killed him, and his sergeant fired a cannon at his store. The State took it up and made so much fuss about it that the post was broken up. Half the town is made up of just such men. But there are many first rate gentlemen in town. We have a large wholesale store just opened.

Perry Wallace was to spend the summer at Jessup. Mrs. Irvine and Mrs. Cutts were there. John Irvine brought Mary Cutts from Washington. Mrs. Cutts could hardly live without her. Major Nelson and family were at Newport Kentucky. He says he is not able to join his regiment in Florida. Miss Ellen is not married yet, though I rather think she will be soon. We have no news yet about our going to Florida. We may stand a better chance to go on account of this suspending the work on

the fort. But the general detail for changes for the fall and winter army movements is not yet out.

Wallace brought home a sunfish to-day, one of the boys gave him, and had it cooked. He was astonished to find that it had no more meat on it. I think Clara will creep in a few days.



Mrs. Wheeler to, Dear Sister, Mrs. Mary Kittredge, at Mount Vernon, New Hampshire, dated at Fort Smith
Arkansas, November 15, 1840.

It has been almost two months since my husband left me for Florida, and I have thought every mail since I would write to you. But something or other has turned up to prevent me. My servants have been sick and I have a great deal of sewing to do. I feel so dull and dreary; feel all the time as if I was expecting Mr. Wheeler home. I go to the door twenty times a day and look towards the road without knowing what I am after. If his life is only spared I will try not to murmur at being separated from him for a while. I have had three letters from him since he left. The last one was written from Orleans, just as they were about to embark on board the ship, Harbinger, for Tampa Bay, to which place the destination of the regiment was changed. He wrote in fine spirits. I also had a few lines from Major Belknap; He wrote Mr. Wheeler was in fine health, which relieved me much, for I knew Mr. Wheeler would not complain if he was ever so unwell. Mary Wilkins is great company for me. She and I have been taking a long walk this afternoon through the woods. We had Teny Towny, as Major Belknap calls Clara, with us. When returning we met Colonel Gibson and lady; they had been at our house.

Cousin Gordon Murray is the sutler of this post, and boards with us. If he had not been here I would not have staid. I would have gone up the river to Erie, but I thought it better to go in the spring, when the waters were high. And I also dreaded the cold weather. I have been so long at the south that I cannot bear cold weather. I feel very anxious to have Mary at school. She is a great girl and ought to be learning something. Mr. Wheeler says he will not be separated from us any

longer than he can possibly help. Wallace is a big boy and one of the greatest talkers that ever was. His tongue is running just now as fast as possible. He is telling his aunt how many sweet-hearts he has and how much he loves them. He is his father's image. He went in to Fort Smith with my black woman not long since; she says the gentlemen all stopped as she was passing them and asked her if that was not Captain Wheeler's son, he is so much like him. Teny is one of the best children in the world; she seldom cries. She creeps and pulls herself up by things; she will soon walk. Aunt takes all the care of her; thinks Teny perfect and is quite offended if any one says she is not pretty, which they frequently do to plague Mary.

It is now after tea; Mr. Lobatt and Dr. Stevenson took tea with us. The former is a wholesale merchant in Fort Smith. He was shot by an Indian some four or five weeks since while on his way to Fort Gibson. The ball went in at his shoulder, passed around under his arm and came out at his breast. He was but eighteen miles from this when he was shot. The Dr. had him brought on a litter carried by four Indians, to this place and put into a set of vacant quarters. I have sent him all he has wanted. Mary and myself call to see him once a day with cousin Gordon. He is now able to walk about and come to his meals. He leaves in the first boat for New Orleans. His family is there and have heard of his misfortune. They are about crazy. Stevenson is his doctor; he lives in Fort Smith. He is a fine young man and a great favorite of Mr. Wheeler.



Mrs. Wheeler to, "My dear sister" Mrs. Mary Kittredge, at Mount Vernon, New Hampshire, dated at Fort Smith, Arkansas, August 6th, 1841.

I have not had a letter from Mr. Wheeler now for nearly three weeks. I am so anxious to hear; I am so fearful he may be sick, the weather is so intensely hot. In his last letter he said his health continued very good. He wrote in fine spirits, but the time appears so long; it seems as if I would never see him again. I am about crazy at times; I fear that wretched war will never be over. My little family are all well at present;

Teny has been quite ill; I thought I would lose her; she had dysentery; in two days she was reduced to such an extent that no one would have known her. She now begins to look like herself again. She talks and says almost everything; calls me Jane altogether not pretending to say Ma. I have Mary at school now; she and Bell go, they walk a mile. The school is a good one; the teacher is a moral, excellent young man. I am teaching Wallace his letters at home, as it is too far for him to walk. His health has been quite good since that last spasm he had. He grows thin and tall; is the image of his father. I was much disappointed at not going to the north this summer, but it was well I did not, for Teny was taken sick the day after the boat left that I had intended going in, and if we had been on the river, she must have died. Two of our young officers have died since the regiment went into Florida. Mr. Glen and Mr. Vose; they were two of the best young men in the regiment. I regreted very much to hear of their death. Mr. Vose was engaged to Miss Morris, the daughter of Captain Morris of this regiment.

We have quite a pleasant little society here now. General Taylor and his aid, with their families have come lately. His aid-de-camp lives next door to us. She, Mrs. Simmons, is quite sociable and I am much pleased with her. Oh what would I give if the 3rd could only come back to this post? We have excellent quarters and marketing is very cheap. I know of no place where we would be as well off as here.

Miss Wilkins desires a great deal of love to you all; my brother also wishes to be remembered. I have been looking all summer for brother Gordon. He wrote me in the fore part of the summer that he would come by land from St. Louis and make us a visit. I have not seen him for eight years.

We have just had tea over for the second time; Perry and Dr. Stevenson came in after we had gotten through tea. They have been spending the day at a sulphur springs about nine miles from this. I talk some of taking Wallace and Teny there to spend a few days.

The mail is in and brought me a long letter from Mr. Wheeler; he is in good health and spirits. His letter is dated the 27th of June. He says there is no prospect of any end being

put to the war. He had received five letters from me in two days, after not getting any for some two or three months. He was glad we had changed our minds about going north, as this place is healthy.



Captain Wheeler to "Friend Whitcomb" John Whitcomb, Esq.
at Hancock, New Hampshire, dated at Fort Preston,
Middle Florida, December 23rd, 1842. With
orders to direct next letter to Fort
Stansbury, Middle Florida.

I must say to you and friends we are all well, but not exactly at the above named Fort, but in a steamboat bound for Appalache or Mount Vernon Arsenal on the Georgia line, up the Appalchecola River on a tour of pleasure of thirty miles. I have left a captain and half a dozen officers at Preston. The Indians are expected there to-day. The Colonel and staff are aboard and all are convinced that they will be in to-day or to-morrow. We reached here on the 11th. I took two companies from St. Marks; got through the gulf in twenty-four hours; the Colonel and his staff went by land and met my two companies at Preston. The Colonel sent out two Indian runners and a war party who tracked them by one having on soldier's shoes; coming near, the chief cocked his gun and stepped on a stick, when he took our Indian for a nig. But the Indian turned round and the chief saw and knew him and dropped his rifle and eleven came in and the rest are expected. So we are all delighted at the prospect. All agreed to join us to-day, but still they may not. I hope and trust they will come in. The chief says he has fifty in all, twenty-three braves and twenty-seven women and children. I have seen eleven bucks including the chief. I have no doubt of their sincerity. I had to leave the wife and little ones, but she is used to it, as you know. I wrote her that she could come to Florida if she would not be nervous about the Indian news. She had a lesson just after we were married when I was after Black Hawk. We have at least two steam-

boats pass our post a day, up and down, from Columbus, Georgia, well laden with cotton, down.



Captain Wheeler to John Whitcomb, Esq., Post Master at Hancock, New Hampshire, dated at Fort Stansbury
Middle Florida, January 25th, 1843.

I wrote you that I expected the Indians that I was after near West Florida would go aboard our steamboat on the Ock-locknee River, and I find that they have fulfilled their promise, but it took them some time to come down the Taluga River in canoes to our boat. Only about a dozen came in at Preston. The squaws and children did not visit us. Jane and I took a trip south for a week and called at Sea Horse Key, where the whole party of fifty are. The government has supplied them with clothing, etc. They were to leave for New Orleans in two or three days, preparatory to joining their band in Arkansas. We left here a week ago and went down the gulf in a steamboat to Cedar Keys, a hundred miles, and spent two days with our friends there and visited the islands and some of our old Forts, and then ran down one hundred and thirty miles to Tampa Bay. There we found many old acquaintances; got there in the morning and left that night, as I was afraid we could not get a boat for some time, and we had left our children here with Miss Wilkins, but General Worth told me I might stay as long as I chose. I dined with the General at four p. m.; a little too genteel for my appetite.

I had not seen the General since I left West Point in 1821. He looks well and a thorough going fellow as all know who have seen and served with him. Tampa looks like old times, as you know I spent November there in 1840. Jane was delighted with the large orange groves filled with ripe oranges. The lime trees were also filled with ripe fruit and at the same time blossoms and green fruit. Tampa has been much improved in looks, as the old buildings have been torn down and new buildings made and white washed, also many handsome fences and paleings. Wife is delighted with the place and wants to be stationed there. They have five companies there, two of our re-

giment, two of the 7th, and one of the 8th regiment and about thirty Indians. Sam Jones' party comes and goes out often and I hope they will agree to go to Arkansas, but Sam Jones does not show his head. My old friend whom I was after so much about Fort Pleasant and a hundred miles around had been reduced from sixty or seventy down to twelve bucks and a half dozen women and children, are still out. They ran away from the Keys some time since. Two of Tiger Tail's men came in after a three weeks scout through Middle Florida after this band called Halpatas, but could not find any signs of them and it is supposed they have bent their necks south and probably to Sam Joues' camp or country. Jane and I went over to the landing with Colonel Belknap and two Indians to have them examine the Withlacoochee River and country. They think if these two Indians meet Halpata that they will stand a good chance to get shot by him. His party killed all our folks about Pleasant and those two delegation Indians were found a year ago in the road near Fort Fanning when I was with Colonel Garland.

They have about a dozen ladies at Tampa and had many parties there just before we arrived. We brought a pilot from Tampa to Cedar or Sea Horse Key, to take the Indians to Orleans Barracks. Lieutenant Henry goes with them and takes his family. He said he would get as many more ladies and gentlemen as he could, and make it a pleasure party. But seasickness, I think, will check their amusements. They will have to put in at Port Leon for wood, where, I presume, they will find some boys and girls to join them to complete the trip to Orleans.

General Worth told me he had informed the War Department that our regiment and the 8th (his) regiment were disposable, and thinks they will leave Florida in April, but does not know where we will go. Jane is over anxious for me to take a furlough, but I am not OVER ANXIOUS to go. Our little ones are well and this is a healthy place.

The Colonel went down with us and has gone to Palatka on a court, which leaves me in command; but the rascals on the alien act have commenced again. The sheriff called for six the other day, and the judge lives out of the county, making it necessary for our officers to attend out of our county. The Gover-

nor said, as well as the United States District Judge, that they have no authority to take our men and officers out of the county; and we have twenty-seven men on guard to keep strangers out of camp. There were two non-commissioned officers for whom they had writs of habeas corpus, and I took their warrants from them and confined them in the guard house and set them to work. They may play ned with me but they will have to catch me first. They have plenty of big fish in our county; our legislature or council is in session at Tallahassee and all are hard up against the other county lawyers and judges.

Wife and Mary Wilkins send love.



Captain Wheeler to John Whitcomb, Esq., Post Master, Hancock, New Hampshire, dated at Fort Stansbury, Middle Florida, January 15th, 1843

This day is the middle of winter and we had a hard frost last night. For the last fortnight I have sent a wagon or dear-bourn and five horses three miles to the railroad for Colonel Hitchcock and his party, and yesterday I did not send out, as I told the officers it might bring the party in, and sure enough the Colonel came and I sent all the Indians down to Sea Horse Key. The reason of the delay was the Indians had not canoes enough, to bring them all down the Taluga River at once. I could hear of our boats "firing up" by the St. Marks pilots, and I sent my Lieutenant (Richardson) with a boat's crew to find out the trouble, but he found them with the Indians on board; so all is safe now. Lieutenant Richardson ran through the Gulf in the night to Ocklocknee Bay, and took up two rivers before he got to the mouth of the Ocklocknee and slept one night within three hundred yards of some of my men whom I left aboard the boat, but they had no muskets with them and thought Richardson's party were Indians and kept off.

I took Miss Wilkins and Jane down in the cars to Port Leon the other day in hopes of meeting the Indians, but they came two days after, I think, and promised Jane, to go down to Cedar Keys or Tampa Bay next boat, and she holds on to me like old grim.

In a letter from Mary Kittredge, dated at Mount Vernon, New Hampshire, July 14th, 1843, to Captain Wheeler, at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, she speaks of having received their letter announcing their arrival at Jefferson Barracks, evidently referring to their return from Florida.



A letter received by Captain Wheeler on the 27th of May, 1844, from Sarah and Eliza, in which the following appears:

"When you told us that you had resigned your commission in the army I expected you would think very strange of us for not making some reply, but not feeling well must be my excuse. I think you would like to know what we all thought of your leaving the army. We hardly know whether to rejoice or not. Since then Charles has written us that the officers are trying to get you back into the army. He says if they go to a new post they will appoint you sutler".

Captain Wheeler was born at Hancock, New Hampshire, December 4th, 1797. He graduated from the Military Academy at West Point, New York, in 1821, when he was in his twenty-third year. He entered the service as brevet second lieutenant of the 3rd United States Infantry, July 1st, 1821. During the absence of the Captain, and during his Lieutenantcy, he commanded company 'H'. His promotion to the grade of first lieutenant occurred in April 28th, 1826; that of Captain, October 31st 1835; resigned February 29th, 1844. He had blue eyes, sandy hair, and fair complexion; height, five feet, ten inches.

He served under General Leavenworth in the Black Hawk War. After his resignation from the army he spent three years in St. Louis, though his permanent home was in Troy, Lincoln County, Missouri.

He married Miss Jane Foster Wallace at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, December 1st, 1830. He died at Troy, Lincoln County, Missouri, June 1st, 1872, at the age of seventy-four years and six months.

Mrs. Wheeler died February 19th, 1908, at Troy, Missouri; having lived ninety-seven years ten months and 12 days.

Appendix

In connection with Captain Wheeler's statement regarding the death of General Leavenworth, the following letter which appeared in the Army and Navy Journal of August 14th, 1909, is of interest.

To the editor of the Army and Navy Journal:

The reference to General Leavenworth in a recent number of the Journal, recalls the manner of his death as given by Catlin in his "North American Indians", Vol. 2, pages 50 and 70. General Leavenworth commanded an expedition to visit the Comanche and Pawnee Indians in the South-West. Catlin in search of material for his work, had permission from the Secretary of War to accompany him. They started from Fort Gibson, designated by Catlin as being, at that time, the most South-West post of the United States. He does not give any definite date, but it must have been about the year 1834. The expedition was escorted by eight hundred of the 1st Dragoons and two hundred of the 7th Infantry. Upon reaching the mouth of the false Washita, where they made a permanent camp, fully half of the command was down with a severe form of bilious fever, which resulted in many fatalities. Buffalo and other game had been seen in plenty, which the officers frequently hunted. On one occasion the General tried to capture a buffalo calf, and during the chase his horse fell into a hole with his rider; who claimed that he was not hurt, but soon fainted. Soon after he was seized with the prevailing epidemic, and Catlin thus writes of him at the Washita Camp:

"The expedition went on under the command of Colonel Dodge, leaving the General in camp". Later, Catlin says that they received word that the General was dead, and attributes his

death to the injury received in the hunt above alluded to. He adds: "My reason for believing this is, that I rode and ate with him every day after the hour of his fall, and from that moment I was quite sure that I saw a different expression on his face from that which he naturally wore, and when riding by his side, two or three days after his fall I observed to him, "General, you have a very bad cough", he replied, "I have killed myself riding after that devilish calf, and it was a lucky thing, Catlin, that you painted the portrait of me before we started, for it is all that my dear wife will ever see of me".

E. H. KING, M. D.

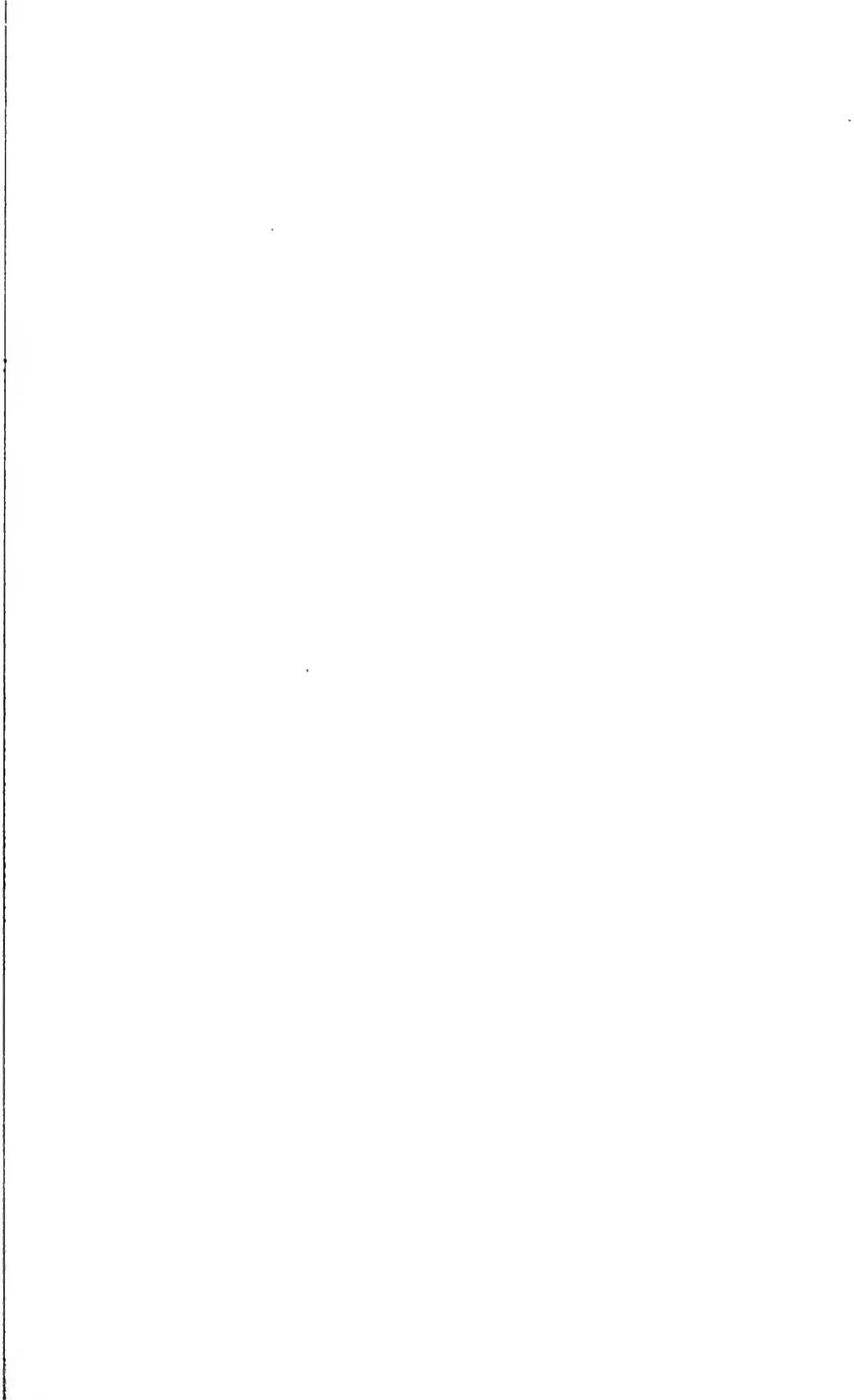
Muscatine, La., July 31, 1909



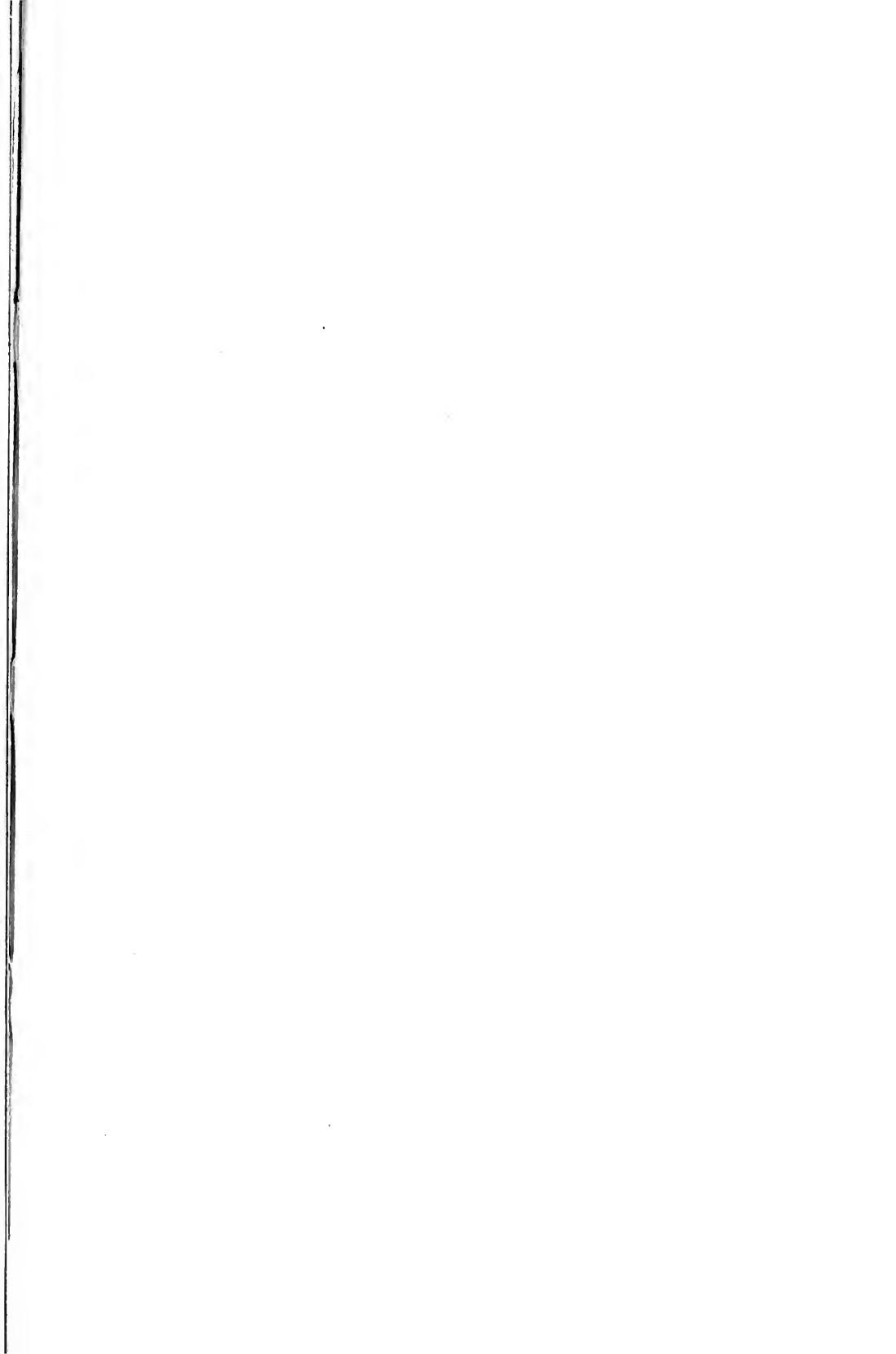
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